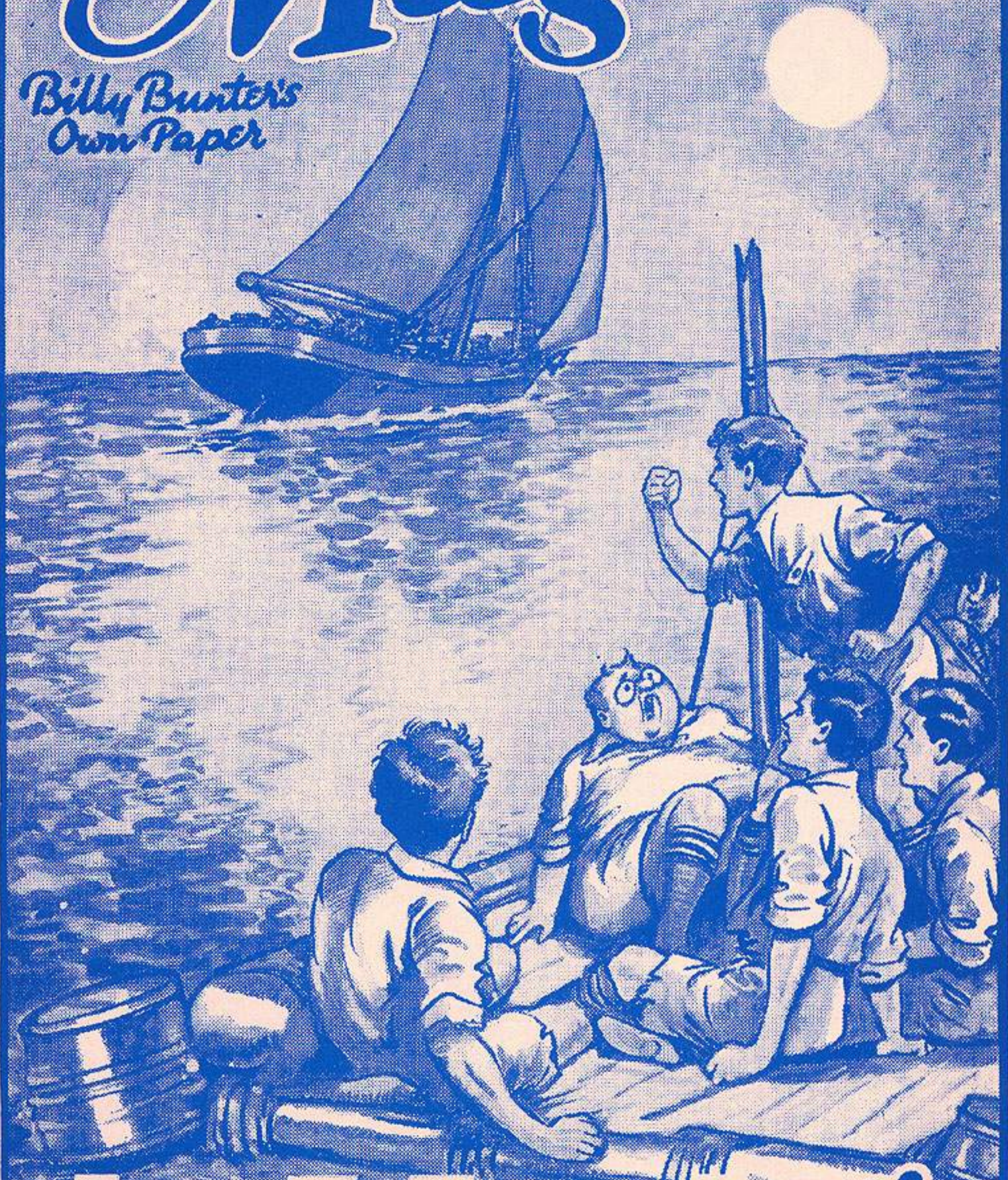


Great New "Footer-Stamps" Competition Starts in This Issue!

The Magnet 2[¢]

*Billy Bunter's
Own Paper*



LEFT TO THEIR FATE!

SEPTEMBER CONTEST KICKS-OFF THIS WEEK!



LINE up for the kick-off of the September "Footer-Stamps" Contest in which 300 more of our Super Footballs are to be won by "Footer-Stamps" collectors.

"Footer-Stamps" are being printed every week in MAGNET. They consist of pictures of six different actions on the football field, and the object of this great competition stamp-game is to score as many "goals" as possible by the end of September.

TO SCORE A "GOAL" you must collect a complete set of six stamps (they're numbered 1 to 6), made up of the following movements: KICK-OFF—DRIBBLE—TACKLE—HEADER—SHOT—GOAL.

The more stamps you collect the more "goals" you can score. (Note that the "goal" stamp by itself does NOT count as a "goal," you must get a set of the stamps 1 to 6 each time.)

There are ten more stamps here to start you off for this month's competition. Cut them out and try to score a goal with them; then keep them until you get some more goal-scoring stamps in next week's issue. If you have any odd stamps left over from the August competition they can be included, too.

If you want to score some other quick "goals," remember that "Footer-Stamps" are also appearing in "GEM" and "MODERN BOY." There are more "goals" waiting in those papers!

"Footer-Stamps" is all the rage—see that you're in it, so that we can send you a football very soon, maybe! Up to 300 more of the 1,000 footballs offered are going to be awarded in the September competition for the readers scoring the highest number of "goals" with "Footer-Stamps" for the month.

Don't send any stamps yet, wait until we tell you how and where at the end of the month. There's nothing to pay, remember.

RULES: Up to 300 Footballs will be awarded in the September contest to the readers declaring and sending in the largest number of "goals" scored with "Footer-Stamps." The Editor may extend or amend the prize list in case of too many ties.

Each "goal" must consist of a set of "Footer-Stamps" Nos. 1 to 6, inclusive—and all claims for prizes to be made on the proper coupon (to be given later). No allowance made for any coupon or stamp mutilated or lost or delayed in the post or otherwise. No correspondence! No one connected with this paper may enter, and the Editor's decision will be final and legally binding throughout.

(N.B.—"Footer-Stamps" may also be collected from the following papers: "GEM," "MODERN BOY," "BOY'S CINEMA," "DETECTIVE WEEKLY," "TRIUMPH," "WILD WEST WEEKLY," "THRILLER," "SPORTS BUDGET" and "CHAMPION.")

OVERSEAS READERS! You pals who are far away—you're in this great scheme also, and special awards will be given for the best scores from overseas readers. There will be a special closing date for you as well, of course!

**TEN MORE
"FOOTER-STAMPS"
TO SAVE!**



Lost on a raft in the wastes of the Pacific with neither food nor water—battered by storms and scorched by the fierce tropic sun—what chance have Harry Wharton & Co. of ever seeing land again?

ADrift on the PACIFIC!

By FRANK RICHARDS



"See anything?" asked Wharton anxiously. Perched on a keg, a chest, and a couple of suitcases, Bob Cherry scanned the horizon. He saw nothing—nothing but sea and sky. The castaways on the raft were alone on the Pacific.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Adrift!

"SEE anything?"
"Sky."
"Anything else?"
"Sea."

Bob Cherry scanned the wide waters of the blue Pacific.

The raft drifted on a calm, almost smooth sea. The casks roped under the corners raised it well above the level of the water, but it was too close to the ocean for the fellows on it to get a very extensive view.

Bob had piled up a chest, a couple of suitcases, set a keg on top, and perched himself on top of the keg.

From that vantage point he was able to get a much wider view than the other fellows, though what he saw was just the same—sea and sky, stretching away to meet on the circle of the far horizon.

It was a glorious morning so far as weather went. A few fleecy white clouds sailed in a sky of deepest blue. The sunshine gleamed on the long, sweeping rollers, that kept up an endless procession on the limitless ocean.

In other respects the situation was far from glorious. Seven Greyfriars fellows were packed on the raft, lost in the immensity of the Pacific Ocean.

Of their position they knew nothing, except that they were hundreds of miles from Kalua, the Pacific island where they were passing the holidays, probably as far from any other land, and far out of the track of ships and trade.

But most of the party were taking the situation cheerily and hopefully. They

knew that they had been lucky not to go down with the schooner *Flamingo*. Deep under the blue waters lay the wreck of the scuttled schooner; but the Greyfriars fellows were afloat on a well-found raft, with plenty of food and plenty of water, in calm and smiling weather. The Famous Five of Greyfriars were more disposed to be thankful for what they had than to grouse about what they hadn't.

Besides, if grouching were any use, Billy Bunter did enough for the whole party. Billy Bunter could always be

Another magnificent story of Harry Wharton & Co. and Lord Mauleverer in the South Seas.

relied upon to hand out all the complaints that were required, and a few over.

"Sky and sea!" said Bob, scanning the horizon. "Lovely sky and beautiful sea, if that's any comfort. The scenery's all right—the very best. After all, we came to the Pacific these hols to see the scenery. It's quite good! Jump up, Bunter, and take a squint at the scenery."

"Yah!" Bunter, it seemed, did not care for the scenery.

Billy Bunter was sitting on a heap of folded blankets, his podgy back resting

against a box. That box was stacked with cans of beef. The thought of it was a comfort to Bunter. Things were bad enough, but even the fat Owl of the *Remove* realised that they might have been worse. There might have been a shortage of grub. Bunter was spared that last and most awful of calamities.

Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent, Johnny Bull and Hurree Singh, were standing on the raft, looking at Bob. They were wondering, not so much whether he would spot a sail, as whether he would come tumbling down off his precarious perch. They were ready to catch him before he rolled off into the Pacific, if he did!

Lord Mauleverer sat on a keg, the busiest man on the raft. He was attending, with great care, to his fingernails. Mauly had worked as hard as any fellow in building and packing the raft before the *Flamingo* went down. His noble hands had suffered considerably from that unaccustomed labour. Now he was repairing damages, so far as he could. This was rather an urgent matter to his lordship, and he gave it all his attention.

"Nothing like a sail?" asked Frank Nugent, as Bob scanned the blue horizon.

"Well, yes," answered Bob. "A sail?" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "No; something like one. But it's a sea-bird!"

"You silly ass!" roared Johnny Bull. "Well, Franky asked me if there was anything like a sail—"

"Fathead!" said Nugent. "Can't you see any smoke?" asked THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,594.

Billy Bunter, blinking up through his big spectacles. "I'd rather see smoke than a sail. I'd much rather be picked up by a steamer."

The Famous Five chuckled. Really, the Greyfriars castaways could not afford to be particular about the vessel that picked them up—if they were picked up at all! They would have been glad to see even Barney Hall's dirty old lugger, crawling with cockroaches as it was.

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at!" grunted Bunter. "I wish we could see some smoke. I'd be jolly glad to see some smoke."

"You should have gone to London for the hols, instead of coming to the Pacific," said Bob. "Lots of smoke there!"

"You silly ass!" hooted Bunter.

"Now, if we'd got a telescope or something," said Bob Cherry. "We ought to have thought of bagging the captain's binoculars before we left the schooner."

"I did think of it, fathead!" answered Harry Wharton.

"Then why didn't you bag them, ass?"

"Because those blighters Van Dink and Ysabel Dick took them away in the boat."

"Oh! That's rather rotten! We've got nothing in the way of glasses except Bunter's specs. Mauly's field-glasses would come in useful, if anybody had thought of them. I suppose you never thought of slinging on your field-glasses, Mauly?"

"Yaas."

"Why, you fathead, mean to say you've got your field-glasses?" roared Bob, staring down at Mauleverer.

"Yaas."

"Then hand them over, you howling chump! Might pick up a sail with the glasses. Hand them over, you blitherer!"

Lord Mauleverer opened a leather case that was slung over his shoulders, and extracted a handsome pair of silver-mounted field-glasses. Harry Wharton passed them up to Bob, who clamped them to his eyes and obtained a much wider view of the surrounding ocean, though it was still only a view of sea and sky.

"Anything like a sail now?" asked Johnny Bull.

"Yes; but it's a cloud," answered Bob regretfully.

"You funny ass!" hooted Johnny.

"Look out, my esteemed Bob!" exclaimed Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, as the raft tilted a little on a long roller, and Bob's perch wobbled.

"I say, you fellows," squeaked Bunter, "make that silly ass get down! He might fall!"

"I'm all right, fathead!" answered Bob.

"Look here, you might fall, I tell you—"

"Well, even if I did it's not far to fall," answered Bob. "I shan't get hurt, old fat man."

"Eh? I mean you might fall on me."

"Oh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You blithering bloater!" exclaimed Bob. "Put your head this way, Bunter."

"Eh? What for?"

"So that I can have something soft to fall on."

"Yah!"

All the fellows were eyeing Bob rather uneasily—his chums alarmed for Bob, and Bunter alarmed for himself. Every time the raft dipped or tilted, Bob's perch wobbled. Really he seemed to be asking for it.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,594.

Bunter was unwilling to move. He had a lot of weight to shift, and he never liked shifting it; but he made the necessary effort. He did not want Bob to come walloping down on him if his perch tumbled over, as it looked like doing every minute.

The fat Owl heaved himself up and rolled towards the forward end of the raft. There he plumped down again.

That did it!

Other fellows could move about that raft without disturbing its balance. Still, they trod with care when they did so. Billy Bunter plumped down his weight on the end of the raft as if he had been plumping it into an armchair.

"Look out!" yelled Harry Wharton.

The raft gave a deep tilt. A wash of water came over Billy Bunter's fat legs, and he howled with alarm. Bob Cherry's perch collapsed on the instant. Two suitcases shot off in two directions, and the keg in a third. Bob Cherry flew.

"Oooooogh!" he gasped as he went.

Probably it was due to the well-known law of gravitation that Bob flew down the slant of the dripping raft.

Anyhow, he did.

He flew, and he crashed—on Bunter! Bump!

Bob's fall was broken. It sounded as if Bunter was broken, too! The yell that came from underneath Bob Cherry as he sprawled echoed far and wide over the Pacific Ocean.

"Yaroooh!"

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bob.

"Yoo-hoop! I'm squashed! I'm killed! Yoo-wooh! Ow! Gerroff, you beast! Wharrer you jumping on me for?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the crew of the Greyfriars raft.

Bob Cherry picked himself up! He glared down at a gasping, squirming Bunter.

"You silly Owl!" he roared. "You did it—"

"Urrrrggh!"

"I've a jolly good mind—"

"Ow! Beast! Groooogh! I'm winded! Wow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ooogh! Ow! I'm squashed! I'm all wet! Ow! I jolly well knew that silly idiot would fall down! Ooooh! I say, you fellows—ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You can cackle!" yelled Bunter.

"Thanks, we will!" chuckled Johnny Bull.

And they did—loud and long, while Billy Bunter gurgled and snorted. Anyone who could have seen and heard the Greyfriars crew at that moment might have fancied that the schoolboys found it no end of a lark to be adrift on the Pacific!

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Part I

"WHERE are we?"

"Echo answers where!"

"Echo," said Hurree

Jamset Ram Singh,

"answers that the wherefulness is terrific!"

The Greyfriars castaways were in consultation. Whether they could work out their position, even approximately, they did not know. A little knowledge of it would have come in useful.

The raft was in slow but steady motion. There was a mast, firmly clamped among the planks, and on the mast was spread a sail. Motion was slow, but still the raft moved through

the water before the wind that came out of the south-west. Direction, at least, they could tell, not only by the sun, but by the compass. They knew that they were heading north-east; but what lay in that direction they had no idea.

If they could have steered the raft into the track of ships there would have been a healthy chance of getting picked up. But for all they knew, they might be turning their backs on rescue.

"Look here, we've got to work it out somehow!" declared Bob Cherry. "We know, for instance, that we sailed south in the schooner when we left Kalua on that trip to Suva. We must have been pretty near the Fiji Islands when those villains got loose and bagged the schooner."

"That's so!" agreed Harry. "But after they got possession they covered a tremendous distance—"

"Running before the wind," said Johnny Bull, "and the wind hasn't changed since, so they must have run north-east."

"True, O king!" said Bob. "That means that we're an unknown distance north-east of some unknown spot between Kalua and the Fiji Islands."

"Oh, my hat! That's a bit vague."

"Well, if we keep on far enough, we shall hit America somewhere," said Bob. "But as that must be some thousands of miles off we needn't worry about it just yet. Anybody know what's nearer than America?"

"Honolulu is spotted about somewhere," said Nugent.

"Samoa must be somewhere," remarked Johnny Bull.

"No end of islands somewhere or other," agreed Bob. "The Pacific's thick with them. If we knew—"

"Unfortunately, we don't!" said Harry. "All we can do is to keep moving and trust to luck. What do you think, Mauly?"

"I think I left my nailbrush on the schooner—"

"Eh?"

"I can't find it, anyhow."

"You howling ass!" roared Bob Cherry. "Never mind your lilywhite fingers now—"

"They ain't lilywhite, old bean," said Lord Mauleverer sadly. "Far from it! I simply can't get 'em clean! They look almost like Bunter's!"

"Oh, really, Mauly—"

"Kick him!" said Bob. "Mauly, you ass, we're trying to find out where we are, and where we're going. We've got the sail up. Did you notice that?"

"Yaas."

"Notice that we're moving?"

"Yaas!"

"I dare say we're doing about a mile an hour—about as fast as Bunter, when he sprints!" said Bob. "But every little helps, if we're going in the right direction. - But are we?"

"No."

The Famous Five all gazed at Lord Mauleverer. They did not expect brilliant intellectual contributions from his lordship. Still, in a case of doubt, every opinion was worth hearing.

Mauly, apparently, had an opinion. Now, being asked, he uttered it.

Bob gave a grunt. It had been rather hard work getting that sail up and getting it to draw. There had been general satisfaction when it was got going and the raft began to glide through the water instead of drifting aimlessly on the current. Really, the Famous Five hoped that they were moving in a useful direction.

"You know all about it, Mauly!" remarked Bob, with a touch of sarcasm. "Yaas."

"Well, unlock the stores of knowledge!" said Bob, still sarcastic. "Tell us exactly where we are, the nearest land to us, and where we can pick up a ship! Bunter would prefer a steamer, so never mind about any old windjammers."

The Co. chuckled, and Lord Mauleverer smiled placidly.

"Well, you see," he remarked, "that putrid beachcomber, Ysabel Dick, and that dirty Dutchman, Van Dink, turned off the course to Fiji as soon as they got control. They let us know that they were going to maroon us on a lonely island, to get shut of us, so it stands to reason they were heading for the loneliest waters they could reach. They had possession of the Flamingo long enough to get clear of the islands. Well, they got clear."

"We'd guessed that one," said Bob. "But there're islands spotted all over the shop."

"Not north-east, after you've dropped the main groups. There's some, of course—scattered spots."

"How do you know?" roared Bob.

"Eh? Lookin' at a map. Mr. McTab's got a big map of the Pacific in his bungalow on Kalua. I looked at it."

"Oh!" said Bob.

"Another thing," yawned his lordship, "as those blighters headed north-east from Fiji, we know it suited them. If it suited them, it don't suit us. What?"

"Oh!" said Bob again. "Fancy old Mauly talking sense! So you think there's no islands in front of us, Mauly?"

"Just a few spotted about. Nothing big till you hit the Hawaiian Islands—Honolulu, and all that! I don't know how many thousands of miles that may be—"

The Famous Five exchanged glances, and Bob Cherry rose from the keg he was sitting on.

"We've got to tack," he said. "No good running before the wind and getting nowhere. We shall have to put in a lot of tacks."

"What rot!" said Bunter.

Bob glared at him.

"Oh, you think it's a rot, do you, you image?" he snorted.

"Utter rot!" said Bunter, staring at him. "What's the good of tacks on a raft like this? The planks are two inches thick!"

"What's that got to do with it, fat-head?"

"Well, I don't see any sense in putting in tacks," said Bunter. "Besides, you've put in plenty of nails, if you come to that. Mauly put in a lots of screws, too. Tacks are no good—no good at all."

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bob.

"Besides, have you got any tacks?" persisted Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! I know Bob Cherry fancies himself as a carpenter, but if he thinks it's any good putting in tacks—"

"Tacks!" yelled Bob. "Tacks, not tacks! I'm not talking about carpenter's tacks, or the Income-tax! We've got to tack! When you shift a sail to get nearer to the wind, fat-head, it's called tacking."

"Is it?" said Bunter. "Oh! Still. I don't see how you're going to get nearer the wind! We're as near as we can get. I suppose, when it's blowing in our faces!"

"Oh crumbs! It's called getting nearer the wind when you don't run straight in front of it!" shrieked Bob. "Shut up, and get up and lend a hand with the sheets."

"We haven't got any sheets—"

"What?"

"We only brought blankets—"

"The ropes!" roared Bob. "The ropes used to shift a sail are called sheets. Now then, all hands on deck!"

It was not easy to tack with the raft. Getting nearer the wind with a craft that had no keel was a difficult proposition. Still, after many efforts Bob was satisfied that the Greyfriars raft was bearing off to the left. He sat with a sheet in his hand, trying his hardest to believe that he was sailing the raft successfully.

"It's all right!" he declared at last. "We're getting to port."

Billy Bunter sat up. Bunter had sprawled down to rest on the blankets; he had not intended to move till the next meal-time, but that announcement from Bob made him sit up quite suddenly.

"Oh, good!" he ejaculated. "I say, you fellows, that's fine! I didn't want another night on this beastly raft!"

Bunter heaved himself to his feet and blinked round through his big spectacles.

"I can't see it!" he snapped.

"You can't see what, you blithering bandersnatch?" demanded Bob.

"The port—"

"What port?"

"You silly ass, you said we were getting to port!" roared Bunter. "Look here, if you think it's funny to pull a fellow's leg when we're adrift on the beastly sea, I don't! Where's the port, you fathead?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You can cackle!" roared Bunter indignantly. "I think it's rotten to make fatheaded jokes at a time like this! That silly ass said we were getting to port: you all heard him—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked the juniors.

"Port, not port!" bawled Bob. "You howling blitherer, we're turning to the left, and you have to turn to the left to get to port—"

"I don't believe we're turning at all, but even if we are, I can't see any port—or harbour, either! Where is it?"

"Port is left—" yelled Bob.

"Eh? I know that! Port was left when we sailed away from Kalua," answered Bunter. "And I jolly well wish we'd never left port!"

"Oh, help!" gasped Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows, I think it's a pretty rotten trick, making out that we're getting to port when we're nowhere near land at all—"

"Port's left, and starboard's right!" bawled Bob. "Got that, fathead? Left and right are port and starboard at sea."

"Yah!" snorted Bunter.

And he sprawled on the blankets again. The Greyfriars raft certainly was not getting to port in Bunter's sense of the word—neither did it seem to be getting much to port in Bob's sense of the word. Still, as Bob was satisfied that he was tacking, his friends considerably did not argue the point, but left him in that happy belief.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

When Rogues Fall Out!

YSABEL DICK, the beachcomber of Kalua, stood up in the dinghy, one hand resting on the mast, and stared across the sunny sea.

His companion in the boat—the fat, brawny Dutchman—gave him a sneering grin.

The Flamingo's dinghy was at least seventy miles from the spot where the schooner had gone down, but it was in that direction that the beachcomber was staring with haunted eyes.

The Dutchman sprawled with his left arm over the tiller and his right hand on a sheet. The boat was moving fairly fast, though not so near the wind as Van Dink would have liked, but he was making all the southing he could. Every now and then he cursed in Dutch.

The boat was small, and it was well laden with stores, and rather deep in the water. It had been a matter of choice with the two desperadoes who had seized the schooner whether to take the whaleboat or the dinghy. The Dutchman would have taken the whaleboat, and left the crew to crowd the best they could into the dinghy, careless if they went overloaded to death in the deep sea; but Ysabel Dick had decided otherwise—with a revolver in his hand.

"Fool!" he said, as Ysabel Dick stood scanning the sea with a dark and gloomy brow. "Are you thinking of the schoolboys who went down in the schooner? They are food for fishes long ago!"

The beachcomber turned his head and gave his associate a black and bitter look.

"It was not my deed," he said. "At the last moment I would have saved them."

"It was well for you that I stopped you," grinned the Dutchman. "If they had surrendered they would have been marooned on Spanish Reef, but they are safer at the bottom of the Pacific. Forget it!"

It was easy for the freebooter to dismiss a crime—the latest of a long list—from his mind; it was not so easy for the beachcomber.

Of what had happened on the schooner after it had been abandoned neither of them had any suspicion; that the Flamingo had gone down with the schoolboys they did not doubt for a moment.

The vessel had been scuttled in several places. The Dutchman had pulled his hardest to get clear to avoid the danger of being sucked down in the vortex when the Flamingo sank. That the shifting of the cargo in the water-logged hold had blocked the gaps in the timbers, delayed the sinking, and given the schoolboys time to build a raft, neither of them suspected.

To the brutal freebooter the scuttling of the Flamingo was a trifle, to be forgotten; but sailing in lawless ships, "combing the beach" on Kalua, had not quite deadened the conscience of his associate.

His feelings towards Lord Mauleverer were bitter enough. The schoolboy earl, though he did not know it, blocked the outcast's way to a fortune. Yet, bitter as he was, his hand had faltered when he raised a rifle to fire on the schoolboy on the lagoon at Kalua. He had resolved to effect his purpose by kidnapping the boy and marooning him on a lonely isle in the Pacific. It was in the attempt to do so that he had fallen into the grip of the law and had been dispatched in irons on board the Flamingo to Suva. Fortune had favoured him. He had freed himself and his associate; they had become masters of the schooner and sailed her into lonely seas to carry out their plan.

But that plan could not be carried out. The Greyfriars fellows, garrisoning the

cabin with rifles in their hands, defied him. Scuttling the schooner, with the schoolboys on board, had been the only solution of the problem—a solution that satisfied Van Dink, but left the beachcomber feeling like a haunted man.

"Forget it!" repeated the Dutchman. "The boy is at the bottom of the sea, and you will be a rich man—and I shall share—if we get out of this! In the whaleboat we should have run less risk. If a blow comes on, what will happen to this little craft?"

"I care little!" snarled the beachcomber.

"Fool, we have hundreds of miles to cover!" grunted the Dutchman. "This fair weather will not last. In the whaleboat—"

"Hold your tongue!"

The Dutchman's little piggy eyes glittered at the outcast of Kalua; he clenched a brawny hand. The beachcomber gave him a look of loathing and hatred.

"If I were a case-hardened scoundrel like you, Van Dink, I could forget the schooner and all that happened on board her," he said bitterly; "but you may be thankful that I am not, fool and brute! I have done with you! You are no use to me now; only a reminder of all that I would gladly forget—a leach to hang on me for the rest of my life! What is to prevent me from blowing out your brains and getting rid of you?"

The Dutchman grinned savagely.

"Do you fancy I did not think of that?" he jeered. "I knocked you senseless to prevent you from returning to the sinking schooner. Did you think I would leave you armed to deal with me as you chose? Ach! You are a fool!"

Ysabel Dick started, and his hand shot to his hip pocket. It came away again empty.

"You have taken the revolver?"

"Ach! Did you dream that I should leave it to you when you lay senseless? It was not likely!" grinned Van Dink. "You gave me orders—but you will give me no more! I would throw you to the sharks for your insolence if I were not going to share your riches when they come. But take care; I have a heavy hand, and I have heard enough from you!"

"You scum!" said the beachcomber, between his teeth. "Give me the revolver!"

The Dutchman laughed.

"It is likely!" he said. "You were master on the schooner, my friend, but you are not master here. I am master here! Give me no more of your lip, or I will beat you to a jelly! Ach! I have heard enough from you!"

Ysabel Dick stood looking at him for a moment or two in savage silence, then he stooped and grasped an oar; he whirled it up in both hands above his head, his eyes blazing.

"Ach! Pas op!" yelled the Dutchman.

He barely dodged the oar as it came crashing down; it missed his head and struck his brawny shoulder. He yelled with rage and pain, and, leaving sheet and tiller to take care of themselves, hurled himself at the beachcomber.

He was only just in time, for the enraged outcast of Kalua was lifting the oar for another blow.

But Ysabel Dick had to drop his weapon as the Dutchman's brawny grasp closed on him. They struggled savagely, the dinghy rocking wildly under their feet and spinning round as it went whirling into the wind.

"Fool!" roared the Dutchman. "Will you wreck the boat?"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,594.

"You scum, give me the revolver!"

"Ach! I will beat you to a jelly! I will—"

Ysabel Dick, staggering in the Dutchman's grip, crashed on the starboard gunwale, already heeling over under the sail. He dragged the ponderous Dutchman down with him.

In an instant the gunwale was under water and the sea rushing into the dinghy. The boat capsized, both the struggling rascals plunging headlong into the Pacific.

The struggle ceased suddenly as they went under. They came up separately, fathoms from the capsized boat that floated keel upwards.

"Ach!" panted the Dutchman. "All is lost!"

Ysabel Dick did not speak. He struck out for the boat, and clung hold of the bobbing keel. The Dutchman followed him. On either side of the upturned boat they clung on, mutual rage and hatred forgotten for the moment in the calamity that had overwhelmed them.

Mast and sail, oars and stores were gone, and the two wretches who had scuttled the Flamingo were left clinging to a capsized boat, tossing helplessly on the sea under the burning glare of the tropic sun.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

The Shark!

BUMP! "What the dickens—" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

"I say, you fellows, we've run on a rock!" yelled Billy Bunter.

"Look out!"

The Greyfriars raft gave a sudden shiver. Something had struck against it as it floated over the Pacific rollers.

The juniors were on their feet in a moment. Round them rolled the limitless Pacific, circled by the sky. There was no sign of land, no sign of a reef. But even as they stared about them in amazement, the shock came again, and the raft jolted wildly. Billy Bunter slipped, and sat down with a heavy bump.

"Ow!" roared Bunter. "We're going down! Help!"

"Shut up!" roared Bob.

"Ow! Help! I say, you fellows—

Wow! Ow!"

"What the thump—" exclaimed Johnny Bull. "Oh, my hat! There it is again!"

Bump!

"It's something underneath the raft!" gasped Nugent. "Not a rock—"

"But what—"

"Oh! Look!"

A black fin glided on the blue water close by the raft. The juniors felt their hearts jump almost into their mouths as they saw it.

"A shark!" breathed Harry.

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter. "I say, you fellows, keep it off!"

He sat clutching at the mast, and blinking in terror at the black fin that glided so close, only a few yards away on the water. Every heart was beating fast. It was a shark, and the striped markings on it showed that it was a tiger-shark. Only the raft stood between the castaways and the shearing jaws.

"Oh gad!" murmured Lord Mauleverer. Even his placid lordship was disturbed for the moment.

"Oh crikey! I say—"

"All serene, old fat man!" said Bob. "Sharks can't climb like monkeys, old bean! He can't get on the raft."

"Oh lor'!" groaned Bunter. "Oh dear! I wish I hadn't left Kalua! I wish I'd never come on this beastly

holiday! I wish I was back at Greyfriars! Old Quelch is better than this! Oh crikey!"

"Dear old Quelch would be flattered if he knew that Bunter preferred him to a shark!" remarked Bob Cherry. "I suppose, taking one consideration with another, that our jolly old Form-master is the nicer of the two!"

"Oh lor'! Oh—"

"All serene, Bunter! He's gone!"

The black fin disappeared.

"By gum!" said Bob Cherry, drawing a deep breath. "By gum! Lucky we had time to build this raft, old beans! I should hate to meet that chap at close quarters!"

"It's gone!" said Harry.

"The gonefulness is terrific!"

Billy Bunter tottered up. He scanned the sunlit sea through his big spectacles. There was no sign of the shark to be seen now. The horrible fish had vanished.

"Oh!" breathed Bunter. "I—I say, you fellows, it's gone! After all, it couldn't get at us. No need for you fellows to be scared."

"What?"

"Keep a stiff upper lip!" said Bunter encouragingly.

The Famous Five looked at Bunter. Lord Mauleverer smiled. The other fellows glared.

Every fellow on the raft had had a nasty jolt, but nobody had been in a funk except Bunter. The disappearance of the shark reassured Bunter. A lion had nothing on Bunter for courage when there was no danger.

"I mean to say, we all knew there were sharks in the Pacific, I suppose," said Bunter, blinking at the juniors. "If you were afraid of sharks, you should have stayed at home, you know. Keep a stiff upper lip!"

"You—you—you—" gurgled Johnny Bull.

"Well, if you're going to show funk every time there's a spot of danger it will be pretty rotten!" said Bunter. "Dash it all, pull yourselves together! Standing round like a lot of moulting owls because a shark happens to pass the raft! Be men!"

"You fat, footling, funky freak!" roared Bob.

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"I jolly well wish that shark would come back—"

"Well, if it comes back, you won't see me looking like a moulting fowl!" said Bunter disdainfully. "I can face a spot of danger, I hope, without making a song and dance about it!"

"That's good," remarked Lord Mauleverer, "because the shark's coming back!"

"Eh?"

"Here it comes!"

"Oh crikey!"

"Hold on!" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

Bump!

Something struck the raft under water. It jolted and shivered from end to end. Billy Bunter gave a fearful howl as he clutched at the mast. Luckily, the juniors had roped on their freight, or a good many articles would have rolled overboard under the shock.

The raft tilted wildly. A lap of water came over one end. Billy Bunter's voice was heard on its top note:

"Ow! We're going down!"

"Oh, my hat!" breathed Bob. "This is getting exciting! I say, that beastly thing is trying to upset the raft!"

"Oh crikey! Keep it off! Oh dear!"

Again the juniors saw a black fin shoot away on the sea. It disappeared. But they did not suppose this time that the shark was gone. The hungry demon

of the deep had scented prey. The horrible thing knew, as well as the school-boys knew, that only the planks stood between it and its prey. It had attacked, and was going to attack again.

Bump!
"Yaroo!"

The raft rocked again. Whether it was the shark's head that struck, or whether it was striking like a whale with its tail, the juniors did not see; but the shock was sharp and heavy. The raft fairly spun, rocking and bobbing, and it was not easy for the school-boys to keep their feet as it tilted. Billy Bunter certainly would have rolled overboard had not both his fat arms been wound round the mast in a loving embrace.

The danger was not, as Bunter had happily supposed, past. It was close, and coming closer. Bunter clung to the mast, clamped his eyes shut behind his spectacles, and mumbled with terror. Every other face was pale. The raft was strongly put together, but it was not built to stand many shocks like that. If it went to pieces it was the end of all things for the Greyfriars castaways.

Bang!

It was the sudden roar of a rifle. The Famous Five stared round at Lord Mauleverer.

His lordship had taken a rifle from the case roped on the raft. He missed a black fin by about a foot as he fired. The shark was retreating for another rush, and the fin showed above the water—not an easy mark as it flashed along. But it guided Mauly's aim, and the bullet struck the submerged body of the shark.

That was clear, for the brute's head showed for a moment over the water as it whirled and thrashed. It had been hit.

"Oh!" exclaimed Bob. "Good old Mauly! Get hold of the rifles, you fellows!"

It was Mauly who had first thought of hitting back at the enemy, but in a few moments the Famous Five had their rifles in their hands. The shark had disappeared again, leaving the surface of the sea wildly ruffled. It was wounded, though probably only slightly, and they wondered whether it was going.

They soon knew!

Bump!

Unseen under water, the shark had rushed back. The raft seemed to lift under the feet of the juniors, and it splashed wildly as it settled again, rocking and shipping water. The enemy was not done with them yet.

"Watch for the brute!" breathed Harry Wharton.

"Look!" gasped Nugent.

Close beside the raft, hardly more than a foot under the surface, plain through the clear water, a hideous shape glided. The rifles banged off in a sudden volley. The water deflected some of the shots—but three of the bullets cut deep into the hideous shape, and there was a rush of red in the water.

"He's hit!" breathed Bob

There was a wild flurry beside the raft and it rocked and pitched. The juniors had to hold on. But as they clung they could see, over the edge, the thrashing shape of the wounded fiend of the deep—thrashing, rolling, and, to their immense relief, sinking. It disappeared from their sight in the reddened water.

The raft righted and glided on before the wind.

With beating hearts the juniors watched for another shock. But it did

not come. The shark, if not fatally hurt, was disabled—and their hearts grew lighter as the raft glided on and there was no further attack.

Bob Cherry wiped the perspiration from his forehead.

"Thank goodness we've done with him!" he murmured.

"Yes, rather!"

It had been a thrilling experience for the crew of the Greyfriars' raft. But it was over. The raft glided on, leaving the wounded shark in the depths far astern. It did not take the juniors long to recover their spirits—but the process was longer with Billy Bunter! He still clung to the mast with his eyes shut, mumbling.

It was some little time later that it dawned on Bunter, that the danger was past. He opened his eyes and blinked round him.

"I—I say, you fellows, is—is—is it gone?" he stuttered.

"Long ago!" answered Bob.

"Oh!"

Billy Bunter crawled to his feet. He scanned the sea and blinked at the Famous Five. For a few minutes he was silent.

But it was not Bunter's way to be silent for long.

"Well, it's gone!" he said. "Buck up, you fellows! Don't worry!"

"Who's worrying?" inquired Johnny Bull in a belligerent voice.

"Well, you're looking a bit sickly, old chap!" said Bunter breezily. "Keep a stiff upper lip, you know! A spot of pluck—"

"What?"

"A spot of pluck!" said Bunter firmly. "What I mean is—Yaroooooooh!"

Five fellows stepped towards Bunter as if moved by the same spring. Five boots landed on him at the same time.

Bunter roared—and rolled!

Only Mauly had not kicked him! And Mauly, on second thoughts, stepped to him as he rolled and kicked him also.

Billy Bunter roared. He roared and roared! But he said nothing further on the subject of a spot of pluck. Bunter was not quick on the uptake—but it was made clear, even to Bunter, that he had better not! And he didn't!

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

The Canoe!

HARRY WHARTON fixed his eyes on the blue horizon, and then, shading them with his hand, stared harder.

It was morning. The Greyfriars castaways had had another night on the raft, and morning had dawned clear and sunny. The fair weather was lasting, much to their satisfaction. They hardly ventured to think what might happen if a "blow" came on and tossed the raft on stormy billows. It was really better not to think of it. The morning wore on, fair and calm, the heat intensifying towards noon—to an accompaniment of mumbles and grumbles from Billy Bunter—who did not like the heat!

The sail was still pulling the raft along at a snail's pace. Bob Cherry, happily hopeful as he was, had to admit that he had little luck in tacking. The direction they followed was not the one they would have chosen.

But it was agreed on all hands that it was better to keep moving. No sail and no land could be seen, but there was a chance of sighting one or the other if they moved on in any direction. They hoped for a change of wind—and

in the meantime rolled on before what wind they had.

At frequent intervals they scanned the horizon for the hoped-for sail. Billy Bunter had stated that he would prefer a steamer, but undoubtedly he would have been glad to spot a sail. Now it seemed to Wharton, as he stared hard into the west, that there was something on the sea—a moving speck—and his heart gave a sudden jump of hope.

"Hand me the glasses, Mauly, old bean," he said.

"See anythin'?"

"I think so."

There was excitement on the raft at once as Wharton clamped the glasses to his eyes. All the fellows admitted that they had been lucky to get on that raft at all, but they were quite keen to get off it again. There was little they would not have given for the sight of a sail on the boundless sea.

Wharton focused the glasses on the distant speck. It became clear to his eyes—toy-like in the distance, but clearly seen. And he compressed his lips as he saw what it was.

"A ship?" breathed Nugent.

"A canoe!" answered Harry.

"Oh!"

"Only a rotten canoe!" grunted Billy Bunter. "Still, a canoe's better than nothing. It must come from some island."

Harry Wharton scanned the canoe carefully, and then the glasses passed from hand to hand, and all the fellows looked at it.

It was a large canoe, with a heavy outrigger and a tall prow, and a crowd of dark-skinned men could be seen in it—not fewer than ten or twelve. It had a mat-sail which was pulling in the wind. It was the sail that had first caught Wharton's eye. But with the powerful glasses the canoe and its crew could be made out.

"I say, you fellows, perhaps it's from Kalua!" said Billy Bunter hopefully.

"Kalua's hundreds of miles away westward, fathead!"

"Well, I've heard that these niggers go no end of distances in their canoes," argued Bunter.

"Yes, but—"

Nobody but Bunter fancied that the canoe might be from Kalua. But it was a sea-going canoe, and it was true that the islanders made long voyages in such craft, so the sight of it was no proof that the castaways were anywhere near land.

They looked at one another in dubious silence.

The same thought was in all minds. Friendly natives in the canoe would be an immense help. It might mean rescue. But—

But a crew of savages would be a very different matter. That might mean not rescue, but a fight for life.

Even natives who normally were harmless might be tempted to lawlessness, tempted to resume old manners and customs by the sight of a white crew adrift on the ocean at their mercy. The plunder of the raft's cargo would have been a rich prize to a gang of islanders.

"Well?" said Bob at last.

"Blessed if I know what we'd better do," said Harry. "There's about a dozen of them—pretty long odds if they cut up rusty. And yet—"

"I say, you fellows, hadn't you better signal them?" exclaimed Billy Bunter impatiently. "They may pass without seeing us."

"I fancy we shall be lucky if they do!" grunted Johnny Bull. "Blessed if I like their looks!"

"I—I say"—Bunter jumped in alarm—"I—I say, think they are kik-kik-kik-kik-cannibals?"

"Shouldn't wonder."

"Oh lor'! I—I say, you fellows, we'd better steer clear of them!" gasped Bunter. "I—I don't suppose they belong to Kalua! Of—of course they don't! I say, let's keep out of their way!"

"Shut up, Bunter! Waiting for orders, skipper!" said Bob Cherry.

"Well, I think we'd better steer clear, if we can," said Harry. "It's not easy to decide. If they were friendly, they could help us out of this, but if not—"

"Oh crikey!"

"Down with the sail!" said Harry, making up his mind. "If they haven't seen us yet, they won't spot us with the sail down. Better give them a miss, if we can."

The sail was lowered. But it was in the minds of all the juniors that it had already been discerned by the brown men in the canoe. Wharton had spotted the mat-sail on the horizon, and the islanders probably had keener sight.

But it was all that they could do. Flight was impossible at the rate at which the raft moved through the water.

They could only hope that they had not been seen, and that the canoe crew would pass on their way without knowing that the raft was there. But they sorted out the rifles, to be ready for trouble if it came.

The distant speck grew larger and clearer to their eyes.

The canoe, when Wharton first sighted it, had been running before the wind—that is, to the north-east, the same direction in which the raft was slowly moving. But as it was a good deal to the north it would have passed them by at a great distance if the course had not been altered.

But the juniors could see now that the mat-sail had been shifted. The canoe had swerved from its former course, and was now running for the raft.

"They've seen us!" breathed Bob.

"Not much doubt about that!" said Harry, his eyes on the nearing sail. "After all, they may be friendly natives—"

"If they are we shall be jolly glad we never missed them!" said Bob. "Anyhow, we shall know pretty soon now. Keep your peepers open."

The juniors waited and watched.

The raft was scarcely moving, and the canoe came on swiftly. Before long the juniors could make out the faces of the brown men on board—eleven of them, with gleaming dark eyes and tattooed skins. Some of them were paddling to help the sail, and they were making direct for the raft.

Scanning the brown faces, the juniors realised that they had been wise in trying to avoid a meeting. There was no mistaking the looks on the faces of the brown men in the canoe. Those who were not paddling already had weapons in their hands—spears and axes. They were rushing down the raft as the shark had rushed it down the previous day, and with intentions just as savage and ferocious. Who they were, from what island they came, the juniors had no idea; but they knew now that the canoe crew came as enemies.

"Stand ready!" said Harry, in a tense voice.

"You bet!"

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter.

Harry Wharton lifted his rifle to his shoulder and took aim at the canoe, now within easy hailing distance.

"Stop!" he shouted. He went on, in the "beche-de-mer," which it was likely

that some of the Kanakas at least understood: "You feller along canoe, you stop along place belong you, along you no wantee this feller shoot along gun."

Whether the savages understood or not, it made no difference. The canoe came on with a rush, and a spear, whizzing through the air, landed on the raft and stuck quivering in the wood.

Wharton set his lips.

"Fire!" he said.

And his rifle rang as he spoke.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Fighting For Life!

BANG, bang, bang! The rifles roared from the raft. There were six of them, and at the short range every bullet was pitched right into the canoe. It was no time to hesitate, for if the canoe reached the raft, and the savages leaped aboard, with stabbing spear and whirling axe, it was the finish for the Greyfriars party. Hand-to-hand they had not the ghost of a chance. Life itself was at stake now, and their fate hung on the next few moments. They fired as fast as they could pull trigger, and a rain of lead tore into the canoe.

Three of the brown men went down in the bottom of the canoe, howling. A fourth tipped over the side, and even as he clutched hold to drag himself back a fearful cry came from him, and the juniors saw a gleam of white as a shark turned to snap. The shrieking savage disappeared under the water.

The canoe still came rushing on. But the brown man at the steering-oar had rolled over with a bullet in him, and the canoe went into the wind, rushing past the raft. But for the outrigger it would probably have capsized. As it was, it went past the raft before the wind, savage yells floating back from the crew. The juniors ceased to fire as it went.

"If that's enough for them!" muttered Bob. His face was a little white, but his hand was steady on his rifle.

It was no light matter to the Greyfriars fellows to fire on the canoe crew, savages as they were. But they knew only too well what to expect if the brown men gained the upper hand—massacre on the raft; perhaps the cooking-ovens on some distant island. They were ready to fight to the last gasp if the savages came on again, but they would have been deeply thankful to see the canoe run on before the wind.

There was wild confusion in the canoe. It rushed on its way, rocking, its crew yelling, some of them brandishing their weapons at the raft. Some of them were wounded, and the three who had fallen did not rise. Of the man who had gone overboard there was no sign, but on the surface of the shining sea three or four black fins glided. Sharks were gathering; in the clear water the juniors could see the hideous shapes winding.

With beating hearts they watched the canoe. Seven brawny brown savages were in it, every one a powerful man—a match for two or three of the school-boys if it came to a struggle. A whirling axe whizzed across the water, dropping a yard short of the raft and plunging into the Pacific.

The raft was almost motionless. The seven in the canoe were gathered in a wildly excited, jabbering bunch. To run down the raft they had to get to windward again, and they were clearly too enraged and impatient for that. The mat-sail was dropped, and every one of the crew seized a paddle.

"They're coming!" drawled Lord Maulverer.

"Fire!"

"Oh crikey! I say, you fellows, keep those beasts off!" yelled Billy Bunter.

But the juniors did not heed Bunter—they hardly heard him. Steadily they fired on the canoe as it came shooting back under the flashing paddles.

It seemed amazing that the long craft, with its heavy, clumsy outrigger, could move so fast. It seemed to come like an arrow.

Had the Greyfriars faltered then, had their steady nerve failed them, it would have been the finish. But they stood like rocks, firing steadily, sweeping the canoe fore and aft with bullets from the magazine rifles.

Man after man dropped his paddle and sprawled yelling. Another man went over the side as he was struck, and shearing jaws met him almost before he was in the water.

The canoe lost way. Every man in the crew must have been hit, more or less seriously. Only two were still paddling, when it swerved away and fled. It had penetrated the thick skulls of the savages that they could not rush the raft under that steady fire. Ferocity changing into panic, the canoe fled as fast as the remaining paddles could drive it.

"Oh good!" gasped Bob. He dropped the butt of his rifle. "Never so jolly glad to see anybody's back."

"The gladfulness is terrific!"

"Keep on your guard," said Harry; "they're not gone."

The juniors watched. The canoe was already distant, but they could follow the movements of the crew.

Several of the wounded men had taken their paddles again. Every man, they could see, had been hit; but some of the wounds were probably little more than scratches. Five men were paddling again, though they did not venture to approach the raft.

At a distance the canoe came to a stop. From that distance threatening howls were heard and spears brandished.

The savages dared not attack again, but it was plain that they were not going. They lay at a distance, watching the raft.

Harry Wharton sent a bullet whizzing over the canoe. Fuzzy heads ducked down and remained down; but the canoe stayed where it was. Every now and then a tattooed face rose to glare and ducked down again.

"Up with the mainsail!" said Bob.

The canoe crew, so far as the juniors could read their intentions, intended to stand by, watching for another chance. The sail was hoisted on the raft again, and it began to move through the water. But the pace was too slow to leave the canoe behind if the savages chose to follow.

And it was soon clear that they did.

The canoe dropped astern, and the juniors hoped for a few minutes that the islanders were fed-up, and willing to leave it at that. But they were very quickly undeceived.

The mat-sail was run up again, and the canoe followed in the wake of the raft. The raft's crew were ready to fire if it ran in; but the intervening distance did not lessen. The tattooed crew did not venture to approach nearer, but they hung on in the distance astern.

"Keeping a jolly old eye on us!" said Bob Cherry. "Well, let them; they can't do us any damage."

"We've got to keep our eyes open," said Harry. "If they caught us napping for a single minute—"

"That's their game, I suppose! But they jolly well won't! Buck up,



"Fool!" roared Van Dink. "Will you wreck the boat?" Ysabel Dick closed with him. "You scum!" he panted. "Give me the revolver!" Staggering in the Dutchman's brawny grip, he crashed on to the gunwale. The next instant the dinghy had heeled over, throwing them into the water.

Bunter, old fat bean! They haven't got you yet."

"Oh crikey!" groaned Bunter. "I say, you fellows, ain't they gone?" The fat Owl sat up and blinked round through his spectacles. "I—I say, this is—is awful, you know! I wish I was back at Greyfriars!"

"What a coincidence!" remarked Bob. "I wish you were, too, old fat man!"

"Beast!" moaned Bunter.

"What about a spot of pluck?" inquired Bob. "Keeping a stiff upper lip, and all that—"

"Oh crikey!"

Billy Bunter did not seem to be bothering about keeping a stiff upper lip at present, and a spot of pluck seemed to be rather conspicuous by its absence!

He blinked in the direction of the canoe, lurking astern of the drifting raft, with a deeply uneasy blink.

"I say, you fellows, are those beasts after us?" he mumbled.

"Sort of!" said Bob.

"Oh lor'!"

The juniors ate their lunch that day with watchful eyes on the pursuing canoe, ready to grasp their rifles at the first sign of the enemy closing in. Billy Bunter watched it, even more watchfully than the other fellows. The sight of it worried the fat Owl, even to the extent of affecting his appetite. He ate hardly as much as any three of the other fellows on the raft.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

The Luck Of The Dinghy!

YSABEL DICK shaded his eyes with his hand, against the burning glare of the sun, and stared hopelessly into the horizon. The shifting blur against the

blue was, he reckoned, a sea-bird, or a patch of cloud; he did not dare to fancy that it was a sail. He sank back again, and, meeting the savage glare of the Dutchman, scowled blackly.

The dinghy drifted on the blue waters. It had taken the two rascals hours of labour, incessant and weary efforts, to get the boat righted, but they had succeeded, at last, and baled it out. But that was the limit of the extent to which they could repair the disaster that had befallen them.

Everything in the dinghy had gone, when it capsized. Food and water, to the last scrap and the last drop, was gone; mast and sail were gone; the oars were gone. They had the boat, to keep them from sinking in the sea; and that was all they had. Their own savage and insensate rage had robbed them of everything else—even hope!

For the rest of the day, they had watched the sea; at night they had sunk down, tormented with hunger and thirst; and a new day came to add to their torments.

Burning sun, from a burning sky, streamed down on the unprotected dinghy. They almost forgot hunger in the torment of thirst. They scanned the sea—but with hopeless eyes.

Deliberately, after the Flamingo was in their hands, they had sailed for lonely waters; far from the islands, far from the track of trade. It was to their own cost, as it had turned out: for in those solitary seas, there was little hope of seeing sail or smoke. They were, perhaps, a hundred miles from the Greyfriars raft, and so much nearer to the hope of rescue. But the hope was too faint to reckon on. Even if a vessel rose on the horizon, they were little likely to be seen—they had no means of signalling. The drifting dinghy was the

merest speck on the vastness of the ocean.

The Dutchman, sprawling in the bows, muttered Dutch curses in the intervals of dismal and despairing silence. More than once, he had groped for the revolver he had taken from the beachcomber—the cause of the struggle that had ended so disastrously—and his piggy eyes gleamed murder at his companion in crime. The beachcomber was aft, his hand near the tiller—his only weapon, if the brutal freebooter's fury broke out.

To reach land was impossible—all depended on sighting a sail, which was unlikely. Some trader, plying among out-lying islands, might appear on the sea-rim—that was the only chance; and even so, they were not likely to be seen.

The dinghy rocked on the calm sea. In the east, there was a dimness of gathering clouds, portending a change in the fair weather that had lasted long. They hardly noticed it—though rough weather, if it came, spelled destruction to the drifting dinghy.

"You scum!" The beachcomber broke a long and weary silence. "You scum! I was a fool not to blow out your brains on the deck of the Flamingo! This is the end—the end, you scum!"

"Ach! It is I who will blow out brains if we come to that!" said the Dutchman, between his teeth. "But for your folly, we should have sailed in the whaleboat—but for your madness we should now be raising land! The crew of the Flamingo have been picked up by this time—and we—" He finished with a string of Dutch oaths.

"And we share the fate of the school-boys we left on the schooner!" said Ysabel Dick. "It is a judgment! Better if you had let me go back to

their help! The boy is food for fishes now—his fortune is mine, if I live to claim it—and I shall not live! And you will not live, brute and scoundrel!"

The piggy eyes glittered at him.

"I shall live longer than you!" answered the Dutchman, and there was a dreadful threat in his gleaming eyes.

The beachcomber's grasp closed on the tiller.

"Make a movement, you hound, and I will knock you senseless, and fling your carcass to the sharks!" snarled the beachcomber.

"Ach! I have the revolver——"

"It has been in the water, fool—do you think it will be useful to you now?" sneered the beachcomber.

The Dutchman gave him an evil look, rose to his feet, and scanned the wide Pacific. Ysabel Dick watched him like a cat, his hand grasping the tiller. But Van Dink, for the moment, was not heeding him.

His eyes fixed on the blur, far to windward, that the beachcomber had seen, and disregarded.

"If that was a sail——" he muttered.

Ysabel Dick laughed mockingly.

"A sail—in these waters! Are you still thinking of a chance of being picked up, and sharing the fortune of the boy we left to sink in the schooner?"

The Dutchman stared long and hard. But he turned, at last, from scanning the horizon, and threw himself down again in the bows of the dinghy.

His piggy eyes were on his companion. Ysabel Dick's eyes were on him. They watched one another like cats.

To the beachcomber, all that remained was the lingering out of life, till the inevitable end came. But he knew, he did not need telling, the fearful thoughts that passed through a mind like Van Dink's.

The man stood to share what he had gained by crime: and so long as there was a spot of hope, he would hold his hand. But when all hope was gone, it was a wild and savage beast that he had to deal with, in the little boat that floated on the immensity of sea.

He took the tiller from its place, and laid it across his knees. He was no match for the Dutchman, if it came to another struggle. And the look on the fat, brutal, bearded face told that the struggle would not be long postponed.

They watched each other, as the dinghy rocked. Neither of them looked beyond the boat again—and they did not see the blur to windward grow larger and clearer.

The Dutchman stirred at last. Several times, already, he had groped for the revolver, but had not drawn it. Now, at last, it came out in his hand.

It was doubtful whether it was of use as a firearm. It had been in the Dutchman's pocket, when he was in the sea for hours, the previous day. But if a single cartridge was still in good condition, he was master of life and death on the boat.

The beachcomber, the tiller in his hand, watched him. And, as Van Dink's hand came out with the revolver in it, he acted—swiftly.

His hand went up, and the tiller shot along the boat, aimed at the Dutchman's head. Before Van Dink knew that it was coming, it crashed: and the Dutchman, with a gasping roar, rolled over on his back.

With the spring of a tiger, the beachcomber was upon him.

Before the Dutchman could rise, Ysabel Dick's knee was planted on him, pinning him down, and he was groping to grasp the tiller again.

Under his gripping knee, the brawny freebooter heaved and struggled. Then his right hand came up, and, with the muzzle of the revolver touching the beachcomber, he pulled the trigger.

Click!

Nothing but a click answered. The revolver was useless. Had it exploded, Ysabel Dick would have fallen on him, shot through the body. But there was no shot: the beachcomber was unharmed. And his grasp was on the tiller again now, and he whirled it up to strike.

Another moment, and the tiller would have come crashing down, stunning the sprawling Dutchman. But even as he aimed the blow, the beachcomber stopped—and his gaze became fixed—not on the Dutchman, but on the sea to windward. Van Dink, amazed, glared up at him, and struggled—to his utter amazement, the beachcomber sprang up, releasing him, leaving him free.

The Dutchman struggled to his feet. He reversed the revolver in his hand, to use the butt as a club.

But he did not raise it. He saw, then, what Ysabel Dick had seen! The beachcomber was shouting, huskily:

"A sail! A sail!"

"Ach! A sail!" breathed the Dutchman.

He thrust the revolver into his pocket. The tiller had dropped from the beachcomber's hand. Hostility, in each savage heart, died, at the sight of the sail that was bearing down.

"A sail!" breathed Ysabel Dick. "Life and not death—a sail!"

It was the tall sail of a cutter that was bearing down, before the wind. The Dutchman's piggy eyes danced. Closer and closer, that tall sail had swept down from windward, unseen by the two desperadoes, in their mutual suspicion and animosity. It was quite near at hand, when Ysabel Dick suddenly saw it—and held the hand that was about to strike.

"Ach! The Sea-Cat!" breathed the Dutchman. "I know that craft—it is the Sea-Cat of Lukwe—ach! We are saved, then!"

The dinghy lay almost directly in the course of the sweeping cutter. They could see a white man, a dapper figure in spotless ducks, and a couple of black boys on her deck.

Standing in the rocking dinghy, they waved, and shouted, with all their strength. They saw the black boys stare, and the white man step to the rail and fix his eyes on them. The cutter was so near now that they could make out every feature of the handsome face of Peter Parsons, skipper of the Sea-Cat, and read its expression. And in that expression they read indifference.

But even Dandy Peter, the sea-lawyer of Lukwe, was not wholly insensible to the claims of humanity.

He remained for a long minute staring at the drifting dinghy, and the two desperate men who waved and shouted. Then he made a sign to the black boat-steerer, and the Sea-Cat ran down to them.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

In Direst Peril!

BILLY BUNTER breathed deep in the cool wind. It had been a blazing day—the sun burning down on the Greyfriars raft like an oven. But towards sunset, coolness came; and the fat junior did not even observe the clouds banking up on the horizon, indicating a coming change in

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the weather that had escaped no other eye on the raft.

"I say, you fellows, 'tain't so beastly hot!" remarked Bunter. "I've been cooking all day! Ooooh! This ain't so bad!"

The other fellows were glad enough to feel it cooler. They were not glad of the signs of a coming gale.

Fair weather had lasted long. For days and days, unclouded sunshine had baked down on the Pacific. But a change was coming now.

It had been an anxious day to the Greyfriars fellows. Slowly, slowly, the raft drifted on—and astern, lurked the canoe. All through the burning day the canoe had hung on astern, following the raft like a hungry shark following a ship.

It was still in sight, at the same distance. All through that weary day they had watched it; but it came no nearer.

And it was towards sunset that the real purpose of the tattooed crew dawned on their minds. They dared not face the rifles again—it was not a sudden rush that the juniors had to look for. The savages were waiting for night. When the dark came, the rush would come.

Faces were grave, as the sun dipped towards the western sea. So long as the daylight lasted, the juniors had no doubt of being able to defend the raft. They had beaten off the islanders' attack and less than half the savage crew remained in the canoe—a second attack would have been still easier to handle, so long as they were not taken off their guard. But when darkness fell on the sea, the matter would be very different.

Shooting would be very uncertain in the dark. The canoe crew knew that, as well as the juniors on the raft.

The canoe would close in unseen till it was fairly on them. Then would come the savage rush of leaping demons from the dark, spear in hand.

The Greyfriars fellows understood it now; but there was no help for it. There was no escape.

The raft drifted on slowly. The canoe was master of the situation; it could have sailed round and round the raft if the crew had chosen. There was no shaking off the enemy; no getting at them to force an issue before night fell; nothing but waiting till the enemy chose to attack. And they were going to attack under conditions advantageous for themselves, hopelessly disadvantageous for the crew of the raft.

It was with anxious eyes that they watched the deepening of the sunset, the thickening of coming dusk.

Strange to relate, Billy Bunter was the only member of the raft's crew in a confident state of mind.

That was because the fat Owl did not understand the danger.

Bunter had recovered from a rather severe attack of funk. For hours he had watched the canoe astern, with scared eyes behind his spectacles. But as the remnant of the savage crew still held off, his confidence revived. Clearly they dared not attack. So long as they came no nearer, Bunter did not see anything to worry about. He even took a nap during the heat of the afternoon—after cautioning the other fellows to keep a good look-out!

Now he was awake again, getting hungry, and considerably comforted by the refreshing coolness. Unaware that the change in the temperature indicated a change in the weather, unaware that the following savages were only waiting for the night, Bunter was feeling quite cheery—and a little puzzled by the gravity of the rest of the raft's crew.

"I say, you fellows, what are you

looking like a lot of moulting owls for?" he inquired.

"Are we?" murmured Bob. "Yes, you jolly well are!" said Bunter, crossly. "If you're afraid of those niggers you can wash it out! They daren't come anywhere near us! Can't you see that, by this time?"

"Sort of!" agreed Bob. "I'm not frightened!" said Bunter scornfully. "I'm as cool as a cucumber—I mean, as cool as a cucumber! It would take more than half-a-dozen dirty niggers to frighten me."

Johnny Bull looked at him thoughtfully.

"Shall I boot him?" he asked. Harry Wharton shook his head.

"What you fellows want is a little nerve!" said Bunter. "We've driven off that gang—and they're afraid to come near us! I'm not worrying about those niggers, I can tell you."

"Keep on not worrying, old fat bean!" said Bob.

"I've got nerve, I hope!" said Bunter. "Catch me worrying about five or six niggers skulking half a mile away! I say, what about grub?"

"Park all the grub you want!" said Bob. He could not help thinking that it would probably be for the last time, but irritating as the fatuous fat Owl was, he was willing to leave him all the comfort he could.

"Well, I think you fellows might lend a hand at getting supper!" said Bunter. "Leaving all the work to me, as usual. I can tell you, I get sick of it! Are you going to squat there watching that canoe, Mauly?"

"Yaas!" "No need for all of you to do it! Of course, you'd better keep a good look-out—they might rush us if you didn't! But I think some of you might get supper ready."

"You think that, do you?" asked Nugent.

"Yes, I really think that!" said Bunter. "I'm not lazy, I hope—but leaving all the work to me is pretty thick. Look here, I'll watch the niggers, if you like, while some of you get supper."

"Shut up, old chap!" said Harry. "Tuck in all you like, but don't talk so much."

"That means that you want me to get up, I suppose!" sneered Bunter. "Well, I'm used to selfishness from you fellows; that's one thing."

And Bunter got up. He was unwilling to get up. Only for one reason would he have got up! But that reason was irresistible—being food.

Bob Cherry opened a can of beef, and a bag of biscuits, for the supper of the rest. They did not feel much like eating in the circumstances; and any kind of provender that came handy was good enough. They watched the canoe as they ate, and calculated their chances of dealing with a rush in the dark.

Scrounging such a scrappy supper was not good enough for Billy Bunter, however; though it was probable that even Bunter's appetite might have been taken away, had he realised what was coming. Fortunately for his peace of mind, he did not—and the other fellows were willing to leave him his peace of mind as long as possible.

There was, at all events, plenty of food; the raft was well-stocked, and the castaways had not thought it necessary to go on rations yet. That would have been a crushing blow to Bunter; but it had not yet fallen.

Most of the food was in tins; still, there was a considerable variety, if a fellow took the trouble to sort it out; and Bunter was not too lazy to take that kind of trouble.

There was still a supply of spirit for the stove, and Bunter set up the kettle to make coffee. There was plenty of condensed milk; and Bunter, by great good fortune, liked his coffee sweet! So, apart from the irksome labour of getting supper himself, instead of coming to him when the other fellows had got it ready, Bunter was fairly well satisfied.

"Like some coffee, you fellows?" asked the fat Owl.

"Yes, that's not a bad idea!" agreed Bob.

"Then you'd better make it."

"What?"

"I'm used to you fellows putting everything on me," said Bunter. "But if you fancy I'm going to make coffee all round, you're mistaken."

Johnny Bull lifted his foot—but set it down on the raft again.

"I don't want to be unpleasant," went on Bunter, "but I call this sickening! I mean it—sickening! Leaving everything to me, and just squatting round staring at a bunch of niggers! You had the cheek to say I was funky this morning! Who's funky now, I'd like to know?"

Still nobody kicked Bunter!

The sun was dipping to the sea. With the thickening dusk, the wind came sharper. The sea was not so calm—the raft rocked a good deal, as it drifted on. Bunter sat and ate.

By the time Bunter had finished eating, the sun was gone. Darkness lay on the Pacific, and hearts were beating hard.

From the gloom came an irritated squeak.

"Who's going to light the lantern? Are you leaving that to me, too?"

"We're not lighting the lantern, Bunter!" answered Harry quietly.

Snort, from Bunter!

"Well, I shan't! If you like to squat round in the dark, you can squat round in the dark, and be blowed! Mind, I mean that."

"All right, old bean."

"Well, of all the lazy slackers!" said Bunter, in tones of concentrated exasperation. "There's the lantern, on the mast, and it only needs a match! Can't one of you put a match to it?"

"We don't want to show a light, old chap!"

"Why not!" hooted Bunter. "Gone potty? Don't we keep the light burning all night, to be seen if a beastly ship turns up in this beastly place?"

"Yes—but—"

"Oh, let's drift about in the dark, if you like!" jeered Bunter. "We may run on a rock, or something! Don't blame me if we do! I tell you, plainly, that I'm not going to light that lantern."

"All right!"

The juniors had no intention of showing a light on the raft, to be a guide to the lurking canoe crew. And they were glad of the drift of clouds that blotted out the stars. In deep darkness, there was a possibility that the savages might miss the raft.

"Well, I'm going to sleep!" grunted Bunter.

"Better not!" said Johnny Bull.

"Like me to sit up?" hooted Bunter. "Well, I jolly well won't! I'm going to sleep, and I think you fellows might keep quiet, and not disturb a chap. You needn't worry about those niggers! They can't even see us in the dark."

Bunter was heard to plump down on the blankets.

"Better tell him!" said Johnny Bull.

"No need!" said Harry hastily. "He's no use—let him sleep if he can."

"Don't be an ass, old chap! He will!"

wake up fast enough when they come. He had better get hold of something, and keep his eyes open."

"I suppose you're right," said Harry. "Bunter, old chap—"

"Do shut up!" said Bunter. "I've told you I want to go to sleep!"

"Yes, but—"

"I think you might let a fellow go to sleep! You've landed me in this—sticking a fellow on a filthy raft, goodness knows where. I think the least you can do is to shut up and let a fellow get a little sleep."

"The canoe—"

"Blow the canoe! Are you afraid of those niggers, when they can't even see us? Have a little nerve."

"Look here, Bunter—"

"Oh, chuck it! I'm going to sleep! I'm not afraid of half a dozen niggers a mile off in the dark."

"Go to sleep if you like, old chap!" said Harry mildly.

"I'm jolly well going to. I know that."

"But I think we'd better tell you that those niggers have been only waiting for dark—"

"What?"

"We're looking for a rush every minute—"

"Eh!"

"You'd better sit up, and get hold of an axe or something."

"Oh crikey!"

Bunter sat up!

"You—you—you think they can find us in the dud-dud-dark?" he gurgled.

"You—you think they're kik-kik-coming?"

"Yes!"

"Oh lor'!"

Billy Bunter did not go to sleep. Of all things in the wide universe, sleep was now farthest from his thoughts!

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

For Life Or Death!

"LOOK out!" whispered Bob.

There was a faint splash from the sea. It was not easy to distinguish, among other sounds, but the juniors' straining ears caught it. It was the sound of a paddle.

For a long, long hour, that seemed like a year to the watching, anxious juniors, darkness had lain on the Pacific like a cloak, hiding all things. They could scarcely see one another's face in the deep gloom.

Thick battalions of clouds rolled over the sky, hiding the stars. Hardly a gleam came through. The wind, which had been rising ever since the sun went down, was blowing hard and sharp. It was cool enough now—there was, in fact, a sharp edge to the wind, and rain-drops spattered on it.

The sea, calm for so long, was ruffled; the raft pitched and tossed on long, rising billows. It was moving faster through the water, the sail bulging, full of wind; the mast creaking, the ropes rattling. There was plenty of sound, though the juniors themselves were silent enough.

Rough weather was coming—a gale, if not a heavy storm. They had a faint hope that the savages in the canoe might run for cover, in view of the coming blow. On the other hand, if they meant to attack, they were fairly certain to attack soon, before the sea became much rougher. In other circumstances, they would probably have left it till a late hour, perhaps midnight; but it was plain that before midnight the sea would be up to such an extent

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that it would be perilous for two craft to approach one another.

And so, every passing minute, the raft's crew expected the attack to come—while at the same time they hoped, from the bottom of their hearts, that it might not come at all. But that splash of a paddle was a warning that the enemy were coming, and that they were near.

Harry Wharton strained his ears to listen. He could see nothing—hardly the edge of the raft over the ruffled, lapping water.

"They're coming!" he breathed.

He could see no sign of the canoe—he wondered how the savages, keen as their eyes were, could pick out the raft. Possibly they were guided by the sounds from it—the whipping of the canvas, the creak of the mast. The darkness was almost black.

"I say, you fellows!" came a faint squeak. Billy Bunter had not spoken for an hour. Now his fat squeak was heard.

"Quiet, Bunter!" whispered Harry.

"I say, they ain't come! I don't believe they're coming! Just like you fellows to, make out that they're coming—"

"They're coming now!"

"Oh crikey!"

Something glimmered in the dark, right under Harry Wharton's eyes. He knew that it was the broad blade of a spear.

He fired on the instant, guided by that faint glimmer.

A fearful cry answered the shot!

There was a sound of a splash in the sea! The wash of water, from the splash, came over the raft's edge. The canoe was close. But that shot had been lucky—one of the enemy was gone!

Guided by the splash and the cry, the juniors fired a volley. They heard the thudding of bullets on wood, but whether anyone was hit, they could not tell.

A dim shape loomed in the gloom. It was the canoe! There was a bump as it struck the raft.

A huge, dark figure, in glimmering loin-cloth, leaped—a spear flashed. By luck as much as design, Bob Cherry drove the muzzle of his rifle against the brawny, brown chest, and knocked the islander backwards.

He crashed back into the canoe, rocking it wildly; but, at the same moment, another savage sprang, and landed on the raft. A whirling rifle-butt caught one side of the fuzzy head, and the savage went over, yelling.

He was up on his knees in a moment, thrusting with a spear, the schoolboys warding it with their rifles.

Had the other three leaped on, at that moment, the outcome would probably have been tragic for the raft's crew. But at that moment, there came a howl of wind, and the sea was wildly tossed.

Across the blackness above, a zigzag stream of lightning flew.

For a split second, the Pacific was as light almost as by day. In that fraction of time, the startled eyes of the juniors saw the canoe wildly tossing, hardly more than a fathom away—and a man leaping, and dropping into the sea a yard short of the raft!

Then blackness shut down again like a lid.

A wild yell sounded from the blackness. The canoe was tossing away before the fierce wind, farther from the raft. Overhead, the thunder rolled, as if the very heavens were splitting.

It was the long-expected storm, and it had swept down suddenly. The canoe was gone, driving wildly in the blackness. But for the savage who had landed on the raft, the juniors would

have been safe from their foes. But the driving canoe had left him behind on the raft—and he was on his feet now, whirling his spear. But even as he whirled it, the raft tilted almost on end, on the tossing sea, and all footing was lost.

The brown man stumbled and went over, and the Famous Five sprawled right and left, clutching hold. Lord Mauleverer toppled over a sprawling form, and knew that it was the islander as a fierce clutch fastened on him.

The savage had dropped his spear in his fall. But the fierce brown hands were on Mauleverer, and he was like an infant in that powerful grasp.

"Help!" panted Lord Mauleverer.

"Mauly!" gasped Wharton.

The raft rocked and tilted; there was no footing on it. Bunter, unseen in the darkness, was clinging with both arms to the mast. Wharton got on his knees. The blackness was blacker than before; he could see nothing. He groped.

Again came a glare of lightning—a sheet of vivid brightness that turned night into day. Then he saw Mauleverer, struggling in the grasp of the islander, on the very edge of the raft.

He plunged at them.

His rifle was gone—he did not know where. He grasped at the savage with his hands and held on to him. With all his strength he strove to wrench his grasp away from Mauleverer. The bare, greasy limbs slipped in his clutch.

"Help!" panted Wharton.

The water came drenching over the edge of the raft. It swamped them as they struggled, and the other fellows groping in the blackness to help. With the weight collected at one spot, the raft was tilting dangerously. The edge was under water, and Harry Wharton felt his legs slip into the sea.

Lightning flashed again, giving a second's light. In that second Bob Cherry flung himself at the maddened, snarling savage, and drove his clenched fist with all his force into the fierce, tattooed face. At the same moment Frank Nugent, lying on the raft, grasped Wharton by the collar, and dragged at him to save him slipping off.

Then, in black darkness, the struggle went on—three fellows grasping the savage, who fought and struggled like a wildcat. The raft's edge dipped and dipped, and at every moment there was danger of the whole struggling bunch slipping into the wild waters. But Frank Nugent was still holding on to Wharton, and with his other hand to a rope. Johnny Bull was on his knees close at hand, the only fellow who had retained his grasp of his rifle in those wild moments. But he dared not pull trigger in the dark; he waited for the next flash.

It came—a sheet of lightning that seemed to cover the sky. It lasted a second—which was enough for Johnny Bull. In that second he jammed the muzzle of the rifle to a brown body and pulled the trigger. In the blackness that shut down on the raft the next moment there sounded a terrible cry—and the struggle ceased.

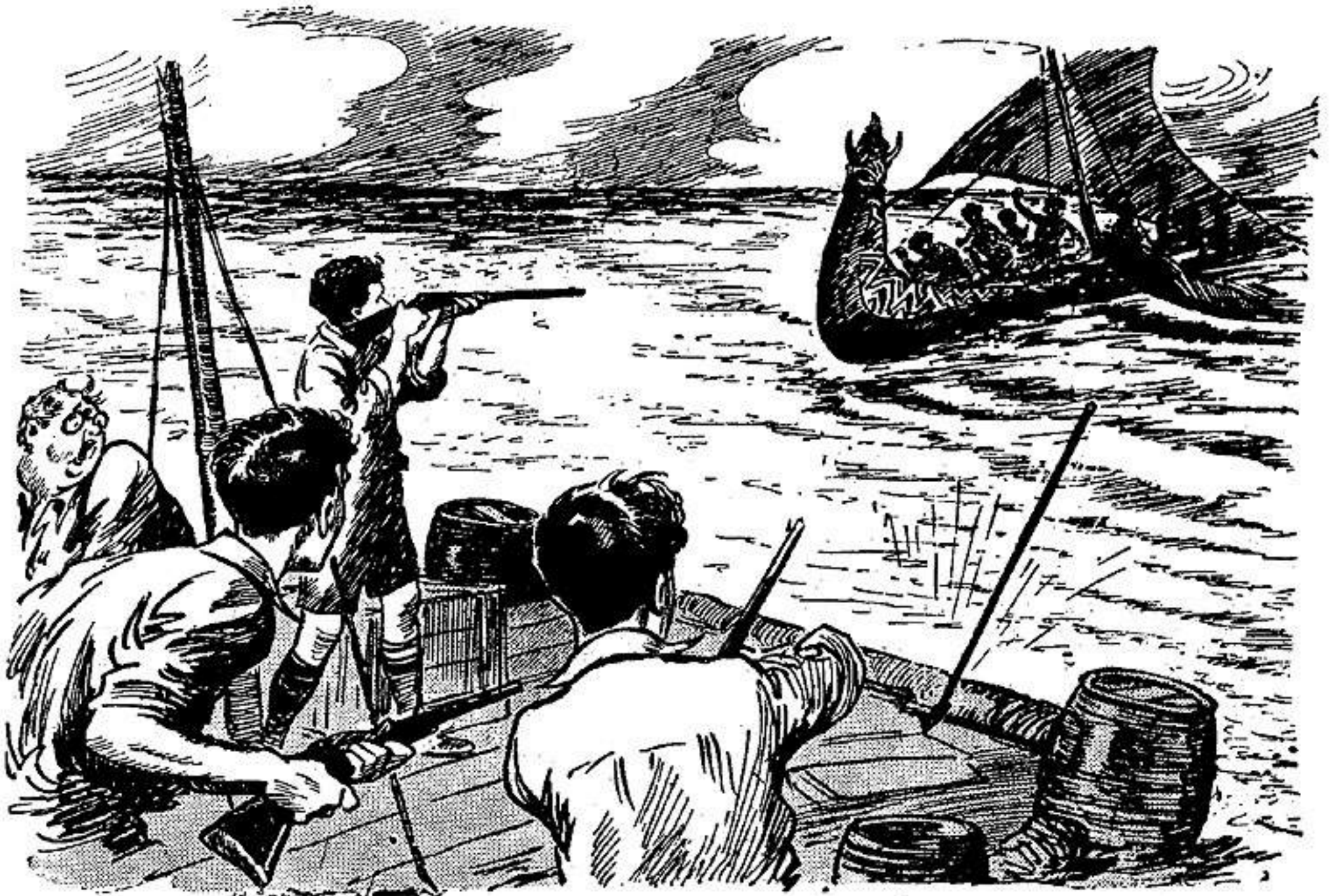
"Hold on—"

"Mauly—"

"Here—"

"Hold on for your lives!"

The juniors did not even hear a splash by the raft. They grabbed at one another, and at anything that came to hand, and held on for very life, while the raft rocked and tossed. The struggle had ceased—only in time to save them. But when the lightning rived the black sky again they saw that the islander was no longer on the raft with them.



Harry Wharton lifted his rifle to his shoulder and took aim at the canoe. "Stop!" he shouted. Whether the savages understood or not, it made no difference. The canoe came on with a rush, and a spear quivered in the deck of the raft.

Dead or alive, he had slipped into the sea, and was gone.

The Greyfriars castaways were alone on the raft again. Danger from the canoe crew was over; the canoe, far away in the darkness, was running before the wild wind. But they forgot that danger now; they forgot that last desperate struggle; they forgot all things but holding on for their lives, while the raft rocked and pitched and tossed and rolled, and every moment in the rage of the storm-tossed waters threatened to be their last.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

The Raft In The Storm!

HARRY WHARTON lifted his head. Lightning streamed over the dark heavens and showed him the vast sea, rolling in wild, foam-crested billows, on all sides. The raft, on a mountain of water, tilted as it slid down into a valley of the sea. The rain came down in heavy sheets. Darkness shut down again, the thunder rolling like the crack of doom, deafening all ears.

That the raft could live in such a sea seemed impossible. The sail had blown away in tatters, but the raft drove on before the wind and the waves, flooded with water. Incessant seas broke over it as it rocked and dipped. At one moment it was high on a hill of water, the next rushing down into the trough of the sea. With every wild plunge it seemed to the juniors that the end had come.

Bob, holding on with one hand, uncoiled a rope with the other. He shouted, but the din of wind and wave drowned his voice. By the flashing of the lightning his gestures told his

object, and the juniors tied themselves to one another in turn on the rope.

Then Bob clambered to Bunter, who lay like a log, half-senseless, his fat arms clutching the mast. The end of the rope was knotted round Bunter and the mast.

It was all that they could do; after that there was nothing but to hold on. They could not slip off the raft now—or, if one slipped, the others could drag him back.

But there was a double dread in their hearts—that the raft might capsize, or that it might go to pieces under the beating of the waves.

But for the fact that the airtight casks were lashed under the corners, it was very likely that it would have turned turtle. But it rode the waters, though incessantly flooded by the breaking seas.

And it still held together.

They had built it strongly—as strongly as they could. They could only hope that it would hold.

The rain beat down in torrents. But they hardly noticed the rain. They could not get wetter.

Hour after hour—century after century, as it seemed—crawled by, and still the raft floated. Sprawled on the planks, clutching hold, drenched with water, deafened by the rolling thunder, they still floated on the sea—through the tumbling billows, the lashing rain, and the blackness of the night. The night seemed endless.

But there came a break at last in the thick gloom. Spent by the long struggle, they lay dizzy on the raft, and did not notice it at first; but the gleam came clearer, and they knew that dawn was at hand.

It was the dawn of a wild day. Beyond the black battalions of clouds

the sun was shining, but only a dim glimmer reached the sea.

It showed them the endless, tossing ocean—wild wave after wave, billow after billow, in endless procession to the dark horizon.

The rain ceased with dawn. But the wind was still blowing a gale, the sea rolling and tumbling more wildly than ever. But Harry Wharton dragged himself to his feet, and, holding on to the swaying mast with one hand, dashed the water from his eyes with the other and looked over the sea in the glimmer of stormy dawn.

Far away in the wild waters a moving object met his eyes. He looked, and looked again. It was a small vessel, driving under bare poles, running before the storm—far, far away on the sea.

"A ship!" panted Harry.

He waved his hand and pointed, and the other fellows got on their knees; it was impossible to stand, except by holding on to the mast. All eyes were fixed on the ship, tiny in the distance. It was a ketch, and, distant as it was, it seemed familiar to the eyes of the Greyfriars crew.

"The Dawn!" exclaimed Bob.

His voice could not be heard in the roar of the wind. But the other fellows recognised it now, as he did.

They had seen that ketch once before—from a porthole on the schooner Flamingo, when they were holding the cabin against the desperadoes on deck. They had heard the Dutchman name it, and name its skipper. It was the Dawn, sailed by the South Sea trader who was called "King of the Islands."

Their eyes fixed on it longingly, but hopelessly.

They could see the ketch from the distance, but the keenest eyes on the



(Continued from page 15.)

ketch could hardly have picked out the raft that tossed on the billows.

There was little chance of being seen—no chance, as they soon realised. The ketch was running before the gale, and it remained in their view for only minutes. The tall masts sank from sight beyond the frothing seas and disappeared.

Yet the sight of that trim little craft was a comfort to them. It seemed to break the solitude of the endless ocean.

But it was gone; it had appeared like a vision, and vanished like one. The raft rocked on, and boundless, solitary space shut down on them once more.

Hour after hour! But the raft still lived, still floated; and at length it seemed to them that the worst fury of the storm was over. Through a rift in the clouds came a golden gleam of sunlight—the noonday sun. It brought new hope to their hearts.

"The wind's falling!" shouted Bob.

And that it was falling was certain, for his comrades could now hear his shout.

It was falling; and it dropped more and more. The sea rolled as wildly as ever; but it was no longer lashed by the roaring wind. The clouds were drifting away to the east, and the juniors' eyes were gladdened by the sight of bright blue sky.

The storm was dying away, and the Greyfriars raft had lived through it. The raft rolled on, pitching and tossing on wild billows; but the worst was over, and the Greyfriars castaways knew that they had come safely through the very valley of the shadow of death!

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Disaster!

BILLY BUNTER sat up.

He blinked round him dizzily through wet spectacles.

It was sunset.

The wind had fallen to a light breeze. The sky overhead was blue, only a few clouds scurrying far away in the east. Only the heavy swell on the ocean told of the fury of the storm that had passed. And the sea was going down.

The raft still rocked; but it floated, at last, with an easy motion, and the other fellows were all on their feet, and had been long on their feet, when Bunter at last sat up.

The fat Owl had been only half-conscious during the storm. But for the fact that Bob had tied him to the mast he would have rolled off helplessly into the sea.

"I say, you fellows!" gasped Bunter.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Enjoying life?" inquired Bob Cherry. But his cheery roar was not quite so cheery as usual.

The storm was over. The castaways had come through the fearful peril and yet lived—almost astonished to find themselves still alive! Their first thought, when they could move about

the raft, was to examine their freight and ascertain how much of it was left. They rather dreaded what they were going to discover.

Somehow or other—they hardly knew how—they had contrived to cling on and save their lives, while the raft pitched and tossed in foaming billows. But though they were still safe on the raft, little else was left.

They had dreaded it, and now they found that it was a fact. Everything that was loose, or that could work loose, was gone.

They had been careful enough. Most of the cargo, of water, and food, had been roped on. Boxes and cases, bags and kegs, had been tied with knotted ropes, for safety—or as much safety as was possible. But ropes had been stretched or snapped in the tumbling of the sea and the beating of the waves. The wonder was that the raft itself had not gone to pieces, and though it had held together, it had suffered a good deal of damage. Of the cargo, on which their lives depended, little remained.

One keg of water was left. That contained a few gallons. Three tins of beef were found, wedged in the raft. The large box, packed with beef tins, that had been such a comfort to Bunter, had been smashed to fragments, and its contents were long since at the bottom of the Pacific. One of the rifles remained; the others, and the case that held them, and the cartridges, had disappeared. Even the one rifle would not have remained, but for the fact that Johnny Bull had slung it over his shoulder, and it had hung there during the storm. Of their implements they still had an axe; of their utensils, one tin mug. There were several coils of rope, and a roll of canvas. Almost everything else was gone.

That they had to be thankful that they had not gone with the rest they know only too well. But the discovery of their loss was dismaying.

The raft had been well loaded when it floated off from the sinking Flamingo. It rode much more lightly now, well above the water.

They had stout hearts; but it was a heavy blow, and every face was serious. A day ago the supplies had been so ample that it had not been necessary to think of rations. Even the greedy Owl had been suffered to eat as much as he liked. Now only the most rigid rationing could support life, even for a few days.

There were seven fellows on the raft, with less than seven gallons of water, less than seven pounds of food. The outlook might have made the stoutest heart falter.

The hot sun had already dried their clothes. The bright sunshine and the calming of the sea brought them a little comfort. But if they did not make land or sight a sail—

Billy Bunter blinked at them. For some time he sat and blinked, gathering his scattered fat wits.

But he realised that the danger was over. A blue sky stretched overhead; the sun was going down in banks of crimson and gold. The sea was growing calmer from minute to minute. It was the best part of twenty-four hours since Bunter had eaten! He realised that he was hungry—fearfully hungry!

"I say, you fellows, what about grub?" he asked. "I'm feeling too knocked up—too thoroughly done in—to move! You might hand a fellow something."

The juniors looked at him.

What had been a heavy blow to them

was going to be a heavier one to Billy Bunter! They had no doubt that Bunter was hungry. They were hungry themselves. But with only three two-pound tins of beef to share out, and no other morsel of food on the raft at all, they were not going to begin till they had to.

"Poor old Bunter!" said Bob. "It's going to be tough!"

"The toughfulness is going to be terrific!" murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

Billy Bunter took off his damp spectacles, rubbed them, jammed them back on his fat little nose, and blinked at the other fellows. He was puzzled, and he was annoyed, and he was irritated.

"Are you fellows going to hand a fellow some grub?" he asked.

"Hem!"

"Don't all speak at once!" said Bunter sarcastically.

The juniors did not speak at all. They just gazed at Bunter, unwilling to tell him the overwhelming news.

Bunter heaved himself up. It was pretty sickening that fellows, already standing, could not hand him some provender and save him that trouble. But he was too fearfully hungry to delay.

"I suppose one of you is going to make the coffee?" he said.

He could not help speaking contemptuously. He felt that they deserved contempt—standing about like a lot of graven images, when they jolly well knew that he was hungry—and thirsty, too!

"The coffee's gone, old bean," said Bob mildly.

"Rot! We had a big tin! Even you greedy swabs can't have scoffed the lot of it! Where has it gone?"

"Overboard!"

"You let the coffee go overboard! Well, of all the silly idiots—"

"We were holding on for our lives, Bunter," said Harry. "We couldn't hold on to the things on the raft."

"Any excuse is better than none!" sneered Bunter. "Well, I'm not a fellow to grumble, I hope—I can do with cocoa. Where's the cocoa?"

"Somewhere in the Pacific, miles away!" grunted Johnny Bull.

"Mean to say that you let the cocoa go, as well as the coffee?" yelled Bunter. "Why, we had six or seven tins of cocoa!" He gave a devastating blink round through his big spectacles. "You'll be telling me next that the tea's gone overboard!" he said crushingly.

"Guessed it in one!" agreed Bob.

"Oh crikey! The tea's really gone?" gasped Bunter.

"The gonefulness is terrific!"

"Well, I think that's the limit!" said Bunter. "Milk and water for me—nothing else to be had! My hat! Milk and water—and only condensed milk! And every lazy swab here too lazy to light the spirit stove to boil the kettle!"

"Can't light the spirit stove, old bean."

"Why not?"

"It's wet," explained Bob.

"You couldn't take care of it and keep it dry!" said Bunter. "But if it's wet it can be dried, I suppose, can't it?"

"Not till the jolly old Pacific dries up."

"Oh crikey! You've lost the spirit stove! Have I got to drink milk and water, and not even have it warm?" roared Bunter.

"Not at all, old bean! If you want the condensed milk—"

"I jolly well do."

"You'll have to dive for it."

Billy Bunter breathed hard and deep. "You've lost the condensed milk, as

well as the coffee, and the cocoa, and the tea, and the spirit stove?" he asked. "Are they all lost?"

"Not lost, but gone before," said Bob. "You'd have gone after them if I hadn't tied you to the mast, if that's any comfort to you."

"Mean to say that I've got to wash my grub down with water—just cold water?" roared Bunter indignantly.

"Hardly! There's precious little grub, and there's precious little water. We're up against it, old fat man."

"What do you mean?" shrieked Bunter in alarm. "We've got tons of grub—simply tons! Wharrer you mean?"

"Have a little sense, Bunter," said Harry. "Nearly everything was swept off the raft in the storm. We're all in the same boat."

"All on the same raft, at any rate!" said Bob. "Cheerio, old fat man—we'll spot a sail to-morrow, most likely."

Bunter gazed at the juniors. He gazed at them in horror. His fat mind seemed unable to take in the extent of the calamity.

"But—but we've got tons of prog!" he stuttered. "There's that box, stacked with tins of beef—more'n fifty tins—"

"It was smashed to pieces—"

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter. "But the bags of biscuit—"

"All gone, old chap—"

"They can't be all gone!" shrieked Bunter. "What about the potted salmon and the potted ham—"

"All gone!"

"The bottles of limejuice—"

"Gone!"

"I don't believe they're gone!" yelled Bunter.

"There's some bits of glass sticking about the raft," said Johnny Bull. "Can't you understand that everything was smashed up, you fat ass, and we're frightfully lucky not to have been smashed up, too?"

"Oh crikey!"

Bunter blinked round the raft. Now that he used his eyes, and his spectacles, instead of his tongue, he could see that the cargo was gone. Not even a suitcase remained, though they had been tied on by their handles. There was not even a spot of soap left—though that was not a loss to worry Bunter unduly.

"Oh crikey!" he repeated. "I—I say, you fellows, what is there left? There must be something? What is there?"

"Three tins of beef and five or six gallons of water!" said Harry.

Bunter gave a gasp of relief. He had dreaded to hear that there was nothing!

"Oh! Well, one tin of beef will do for me," he said. "I'm not greedy, I hope. Where is it?"

The juniors gazed at him. Bunter was being very moderate—for him! One tin of beef contained only one pound! But the idea of a third of the total supplies on the raft going in a single meal for Bunter did not seem to appeal to the rest, somehow.

"Boot him!" suggested Johnny Bull.

"Beast! I say, you fellows, where—"

"We've got to go on rations now, Bunter," said Harry, "and they're going to be awfully thin. One tin of beef will have to last the lot of us a whole day."

"Eh?"

"Make the best of it, old chap. It can't be helped!"

"Beast!"

"My esteemed Bunter—"

"I'm hungry."

"We're all hungry!" remarked Nugent.

"Oh, don't jaw! Look here, I'm

going to have something to eat!" roared Bunter. "If you fellows think I'm going to starve to please you, you're jolly well mistaken, see?"

Lord Mauleverer sighed.

"My fault!" he said.

"You fathead!" said Bob. "How is it your fault? You couldn't help the stuff going any more than we could."

"Oh, no! But I could have kicked Bunter along the Remove passage at Greyfriars, instead of letting him hike along!" said Mauleverer. "I dare say he'd rather now that I had!"

"Bit too late to think of that!" chuckled Bob. "What's the orders, skipper? Spot of supper, or hold out till to-morrow?"

Harry Wharton paused. Billy Bunter was not the only fellow on the raft who was fearfully hungry. They had eaten nothing since the scrappy supper nearly twenty-four hours ago.

"I think we'd better hold out as long as we can, before we touch anything," said Harry at last. "It's about two ounces of food each—"

"Sixteen ounces to a pound!" said Lord Mauleverer. "Two each for us and four for Bunter."

"Oh crikey!"

"Share and share alike!" growled Johnny Bull. "That's cricket—"

"Yaas, but Bunter's rather a pig, you know—"

"Beast!"

"I think we'd better hold out till morning," said Harry.

"I'm hungry!" roared Bunter.

"You'll get used to that, old fat bean!" said Bob. "After all, you can live on your fat, like a polar bear, for a week or two. That's where you come in."

"Beast!"

"We've all got to stand it, Bunter," said Harry.

"Rotter! I'm hungry! I'm thirsty, too!"

"Nobody else thirsty?" snorted Johnny Bull.

"I'm parched—"

"Oh, give him a mug of water, and shut him up!" said Johnny.

Bunter was given a mug of the precious fluid—more precious to the Greyfriars castaways than all the pearls of the Pacific—but it did not shut him up! Far from that!

The sun went down to the sea and night fell on the rolling ocean. And as the raft drifted on, it drifted to a more or less musical accompaniment of groans, moans, mumbles, and squeaks from the unhappy Owl of the Remove—whose sufferings were so fearful that he really had no leisure to think of anybody else's.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Short Commons!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. had little sleep that night.

Even Billy Bunter had little.

There was only one blanket left on the raft. Billy Bunter took possession of that as a matter of course, and no one said him nay. There was not a single pillow—not even one for Bunter.

Bunter made shift with the roll of canvas that fortunately remained. The other fellows made shift with nothing.

Luckily, the night was mild. Neither were the castaways thinking much about hardship and discomfort—with such prospects before them.

Every fellow was ravenously hungry, though only Billy Bunter found relief in groaning about it. Every fellow was thirsty—though that, they knew,

was a mere trifle compared with what it was going to be when the tropic sun blazed down on them again.

Perhaps it was fortunate for Bunter that he thought more of his immediate sufferings than of the dreadful prospects ahead. The fact that he was hungry filled Billy Bunter's fat mind from stem to stern, so to speak. It was so awful, that he did not even reflect that later on he would be hungrier—indeed, it seemed impossible for him to be hungrier than he now was!

But the other fellows were thinking of their prospects—dark enough, when they had a well-found raft stacked with food and water in those solitary seas. Now they had a damaged raft, though it still floated, and hardly anything in the way of provender.

Unless they sighted land, or a ship, it could not last many days. Land was hopelessly unlikely; in those seas there were only distant scattered islands—spots on the illimitable ocean.

A ship was little more likely. Since they had been on the raft they had sighted only one vessel—a distant glimpse of the ketch running before the gale. It was a comfort to them to remember it, for it showed that those lonely seas were not wholly deserted. But that ketch, more likely than not, was a hundred miles or more away by this time. The chance of seeing another vessel was slim.

Sooner or later, no doubt, they could have hoped for land or a ship—had they been able to hold out for day after day, week after week. The storm had been their undoing, and it had brought irreparable disaster.

It was a matter of brief days now—and if, in the course of a few days at the most, they did not find help or rescue, the end was certain.

Nevertheless, when the dawn brightened the Pacific again, Bob Cherry's cheery "Hallo, hallo, hallo!" was heard as he rose and shook himself and then went through some physical jerks. Bob simply could not do without exercise of some kind—and as there was nothing else available on the raft, he took it out in jerks.

Johnny Bull gave him a feeble grin. "Trying to work up an appetite for brekker?" he asked.

At which Bob chuckled.

Nobody needed to work up an appetite that morning. The castaways were feeling by that time almost as if they could have chewed their boots.

Billy Bunter sat up and blinked through his spectacles with lack-lustre eyes. Those eyes almost popped through his spectacles when Harry Wharton took up one of the precious cans of beef. Billy Bunter gazed at that tin of beef as Moses of old gazed on the Promised Land!

There had been several can-openers on board; but they were now at the bottom of the Pacific with most of the other implements so carefully brought away from the scuttled schooner. But Bob Cherry had one of those fearsome pocket-knives which combine all sorts of useful tools—a can-opener among the others. He opened that can carefully. Empty—as it was very quickly going to be—it would answer the purpose of a mug. Which, as Bob cheerfully remarked, would double the supply of crockery-ware!

The contents of that tin seemed fearfully small when turned out. In his present hungry state, any fellow there could have disposed of the lot and eaten a good breakfast afterwards!

Bob Cherry carefully divided the block of beef with his knife into seven

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portions—one double the size of the others.

It was Mauly's suggestion, but all the fellows agreed to a double allowance for Bunter. They were all fearfully hungry, but there could be little doubt that Bunter was twice as hungry as any other fellow—if not thrice or four times!

That concession, however, only elicited a groan from the hapless fat Owl. He blinked drearily at his chunk.

"Eat slowly," said Bob. "Make it last as long as you can!"

Groan!

"Yaas, that's a good idea!" said Lord Mauleverer. "Food eaten slowly is twice as nourishin' as food eaten fast. The less you can do with, you know, the more you save the trouble of eatin'."

"You idiot!" said Bunter.

"Eh?"

"You fathead!"

"My dear chap——"

"You blithering chump!"

"Thanks!"

"Dummy!"

Billy Bunter was generally keen on saving trouble, but it had certainly never occurred to his fat mind to save the trouble of eating. That was a trouble that Bunter was always prepared to take.

Bunter gobbled.

His chunk went down almost like an oyster.

The other fellows ate slowly, but the process did not take long. And, small as each portion was, it had an invigorating effect. Every fellow was feeling immensely better for that very light breakfast.

"Now pass the water!" said Bob.

Billy Bunter looked at the tin mug, which was passed to him first, half full of water. His feelings seemed inexpressible in words. He mopped up that small supply in a twinkling. Then he rendered thanks with a deep, prolonged groan.

The mug was passed from hand to hand with great care. The juniors would rather have dropped diamonds and pearls about than one spot of that precious water.

"Oh crikey!" moaned Bunter. "I say, you fellows, I'm fearfully hungry! I know you don't care, but I'm famished! I can't hold out till midday on that—I can't really!"

To which there was no reply. There was not to be another meal till the following morning.

"I say, you fellows, I shouldn't wonder if we spot a sail to-day!" said Bunter.

"Let's hope so!" agreed Bob. "Jolly good chance, I—I hope."

"Well, then, if we get picked up we shall feel silly asses, leaving the food over, when it won't be wanted. See?"

"We're not picked up yet."

"Well, I think——"

"Bite on the bullet, old fat man," said Bob. "We've got to make this spot of grub see us through three days. Go to sleep!"

"How can I go to sleep when I'm frightfully hungry?" howled Bunter.

"Well, look here, give us some of your ventriloquism," said Bob heroically. "We can stand it—I mean, we—we'd like it no end."

"Do, old bean!" said Harry.

"It will be a terrifically entertaining entertainment, my esteemed Bunter!" declared Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh.

"Go it, Bunter!"

"Yaas, go it, old bean!"

It was probably the first time on record that the fat ventriloquist of the

Remove had been urged to put up ventriloquial stunts. But all the fellows were nobly prepared to stand it to take Bunter's fat mind off his troubles.

But there was nothing doing. In other circumstances the fat Owl would have been only too happy to show off his wonderful ventriloquism. Now he only groaned dismally.

Bunter was past comfort.

He sat and groaned.

Matters were serious enough, but nobody else on the raft felt disposed to pass the day groaning. They got busy.

The blue horizon was scanned through the field-glasses, revealing only sky and sea. Then the spare canvas was unrolled and shaped into a sail, to replace the one that had blown away in the storm. There was little wind, and what there was was not from the direction they would have chosen; but it was something to get the raft moving.

There was always a sporting chance, at least, of sighting one of the scattered isles of the Pacific. The sight of nodding palms on the sea-rim would have brought hope and joy to all hearts.

From the masthead a rag fluttered in the breeze—a signal of distress if only there were eyes to see it.

Repairing the damages to the raft occupied them next. Tool-chest and tools, nails and screws, were all gone; but there was still plenty of rope, and loosened planks could be lashed. And they all realised that it was better to keep as busy as they could.

But when the hot sun of noon blazed down they could do nothing but shelter themselves as much as possible from its burning rays, and wait for the heat to pass. And hunger was almost forgotten in the thirst that dried their throats and parched their lips. At long intervals a spot of water was passed round—hardly more than enough to wet their lips. And as the raft rolled slowly on, under the blaze of a sun that seemed like a furnace, even Bob Cherry's cheery voice was silent.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Drifting!

THE long, long day drew to a close, and night lay once more on the Pacific and the raft that drifted under a starry sky.

No trace of the storm remained now. The sea was calm, almost glassy; the wind light. The raft rolled on with an even motion, making, perhaps, a knot an hour. It was something to escape the deadly glare of the tropical sun—the penetrating heat that seemed to bake the very marrow of their bones. Yet when darkness descended the faint hope of rescue died. In the night a ship, if ship there was, would pass them unseen.

The lantern was lighted at the masthead, gleaming through the night. It was the only signal they could make in the dark hours. But there was no further supply of oil when once it had burned out. The oil drum had gone with the rest in the storm.

If the previous night they had slept little, they slept less now. Hunger was keen, and thirst was bitter.

Billy Bunter had ceased to complain. Only occasional moans and groans came from Bunter. He lay on the only blanket, his head pillowed on a fat arm, and slept by fits and starts, and awakened to moan and groan again.

Towards midnight the lantern expired.

The raft drifted on in starlight. Myriads of bright stars glittered in a vault of dark blue. The Southern

Cross hung in the sky like a mass of jewels.

The juniors dozed occasionally, exchanged a word every now and then, and counted the hours, or, rather, the minutes, to dawn.

Dawn meant another day of blazing heat and torturing thirst, yet they longed for the daylight to return.

"I wonder——" said Bob Cherry, breaking a long silence.

"Yes, old chap?" said Harry.

"I wonder if there's just a ghost of a chance of Mr. McTab sending in search of us?"

"Um!"

"Captain Ka and the crew went off in the whaleboat," said Bob. "Ten to one they've been picked up. They'd pass on the news."

"They knew that those villains intended to scuttle the Flamingo," said Harry. "They could only pass on the news that the schooner was scuttled—with us on board. Still, there might be a ghost of a chance——"

"Yaas!" said Lord Mauleverer's voice from the shadows. "That jolly old bean McTab wouldn't leave a stone unturned. I'll bet you he'll bag a steamer as soon as he gets the news, to search for anything that may be left of the Flamingo."

"But when will he get the news?" said Harry. "The whaleboat may have made land, or been picked up, but it was hundreds of miles from Kalua."

"And how would they find out where the Flamingo was scuttled?" muttered Johnny Bull. "The whaleboat was left at least a hundred miles astern before those villains scuttled it."

"And we're at least fifty or sixty miles from the spot, even if they could locate it!" murmured Nugent.

"Yaas, it doesn't look a fearfully healthy chance," remarked Lord Mauleverer. "Not the sort of chance a fellow would put his shirt on—what?"

"While there's life there's hope," said Bob.

"Hope springs eternal in the human chest, as the esteemed poet remarks," murmured Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh.

There was a faint chuckle.

"Make it the human breast, old bean!" said Bob. "I believe that's how the jolly old poet put it."

"I say, you fellows!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! You awake, old fat man?"

"Yes, I am! I'm too hungry to sleep," moaned Bunter.

"Hard cheese, old chap!"

"And too thirsty!" moaned Bunter.

"I say, I think very likely we shall see a ship in the morning! I—I think perhaps we'd better have a go at the beef."

"Fathead!"

"Beast!" moaned Bunter, and he was silent again.

"We've got to keep a stiff upper lip!" said Bob, after another long silence. "Men have lived through this kind of thing and lived to tell the tale. We shan't be sorry it happened, really, when we're talking about it in the study at Greyfriars some day——"

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Nugent. "I wish we were there, talking about it now. I'd rather talk about it than go through it any day."

"I say, you fellows!" came a deep groan. "I say, do you remember that feed in Smithy's study at the end of the term! Three kinds of jam——"

"Go to sleep and dream about it, old fat man."

"Don't I wish I could!" moaned Bunter.

But a snore was heard at last. Bunter



The tide carried the raft up the beach, and while Bob Cherry prepared to make it fast to a palm-tree, the exhausted Juniors gathered round Bunter. The long ordeal had left the fat Owl too weak to stand.

had gone to sleep. The other fellows nodded from time to time.

Harry Wharton's eyes opened at the sound of a splash by the raft. He looked round him, rose to his feet, and scanned the sea.

Starlit water, gleaming with the reflection of the unnumbered stars in the sky overhead, was all that met his gaze. Then something glided hardly a fathom from the edge of the raft.

It was a black fin.

He caught his breath, with a shudder.

The fin disappeared, but now he could make out the shape of the shark under the water. With the remembrance of what had happened before, he stretched out his hand to the rifle.

But the shark made no motion to attack the raft. It was following and keeping pace. Once, twice, the hideous shape disappeared; but it returned. It was terrible company for the castaways.

"See anything, old chap?" asked Frank Nugent, peering up at Harry as he stood.

"Only something in the water!" said Harry hastily. And he lay down again.

He could no longer see the shark; but he knew that it was still following the raft. The thought of those fearful jaws hardly a dozen feet away banished slumber. It was long before his eyes closed again.

But he must have slept, for when he opened them once more it was to blink in the brightness of the rising sun. He sat up and stared round him.

Bob Cherry was already up, scanning the sea with Mauly's glasses. He shut them again, and Wharton did not need to ask if he had seen anything but endless sea and endless sky.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Nice morning!" said Bob, with an attempt at his old cheerfulness.

"Fine!" said Harry, with a faint grin.

He rose to his feet. It was a glorious morning, the Pacific shining and glistening in the bright sunrise. Such bright mornings had dawned on the juniors making holiday on the island of Kalua. How far were they from Kalua and its white beach and nodding palms and Mr. McTab's bungalow now? Hundreds of miles, at least! How little hope there was of ever seeing Mauly's island or Mauly's manager again Wharton knew only too well.

He glanced at Mauleverer. It was in the hope of finding his missing cousin, Brian Mauleverer, in the South Seas that poor old Mauly had planned that holiday at the Pacific island. He was never likely to find Brian now!

Indeed, if no help came to the castaways on the raft, if the end came while they still floated adrift on the Pacific, Brian would be Lord Mauleverer—the "bad hat" of the family would be an earl and a millionaire, owner of great estates, including the island of Kalua. That would be the outcome of the villainy of Ysabel Dick and Van Dink!

"Poor old Mauly!" murmured Harry.

Mauleverer's eyes opened.

"Have I been asleep?" he yawned. "By gum, it's mornin'! Jolly nice mornin', you men! We don't get surprises like this at Greyfriars!"

"Give me Greyfriars, all the same," said Johnny Bull. "I'd change this for a London fog, Mauly."

Snore!

"Dear old Bunter's asleep!" said Mauleverer, glancing at a fat face in which the eyes were closed and the mouth open. "Don't wake him! I dare say he's dreamin' of that feed in Smithy's study."

Bunter snored on. Six pairs of eyes fixed on the can of beef that was to form the day's meal. Never in all their young

lives had the Greyfriars fellows been so fearfully hungry.

Bob Cherry grinned faintly.

"A little more of this and we shall all turn into Bunter's!" he remarked. "I say, how would you like to be walking into the tuckshop at Greyfriars just now?"

"Oh, don't!" groaned Nugent.

"Lovely mornin', anyhow!" said Lord Mauleverer. "And the sea like a pond. We can get a dip, at any rate."

"Hold on!" said Harry hastily.

"Eh, why?"

The captain of the Greyfriars Remove pointed. The hideous fish was still under the lee of the raft, still following, still keeping pace, with the deadly patience of the shark.

"Oh gad!" murmured Lord Mauleverer. He shivered and gave up the idea of a dip on the spot.

"I say, you fellows!" Billy Bunter woke and sat up. "I say, I'm hungry."

And the can of beef was opened and shared, and washed down with a slim allowance of water. And then the castaways, hungry and thirsty, watched the sea, with the hope deferred that makes the heart sick, and the raft drifted on gently before the wind, and under its lee the shark followed.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

A Sail In Sight!

LORD MAULEVERER rose to his feet in the blazing sunshine of the afternoon. For a long, long time his lordship had been sitting with his back to the keg, his eyes on the sea. And for a long time it had seemed to him that there was something on the western horizon that might have been a drifting cloud, and might have

been a winging albatross, and might have been—he hardly dared to hope so—a sail!

He would not rouse the hopes of his comrades till he was sure. Standing on the raft, he fixed his eyes on the speck in the blue west. The wind was still coming out of the west by south, and the sail, if it were a sail, was coming down before the wind.

Mauleverer's heart beat thickly.

He gave a glance at his companions. Bunter, getting all the shade he could from the little sail on the raft, his hat over his eyes, was nodding, with an occasional mumble that showed that he was not asleep. Bob Cherry, whose energy even the present circumstances could not do more than diminish a little, was trailing a net of plaited rope behind the raft—in the happy hope of catching fish. Wharton, Nugent, Johnny, and the nabob watched him idly, aware exactly how much chance he had of making any catch.

Not many days ago the bare thought of eating raw fish would have made the juniors shudder. Now they would have been glad of it. Already they were chewing bits of leather in the hope of assuaging the pangs of hunger.

But Bob had made no catch so far. His chance of making one was rather infinitesimal.

"Who's got the glasses?" asked Mauly.

"Here you are, old man!" Harry Wharton handed them up to him. "Think you can see anything?"

"Might as well have a squint!"

Mauly focused the glasses on the glowing west. The other fellows watched him instead of watching Bob. But they watched him without hope. Hope, at last, was dying in their hearts.

Lord Mauleverer breathed hard and deep. That "something" in the west grew clearer through the powerful glasses.

Was it a sail?

He could not be sure yet. But his heart beat, and the glasses trembled in his hand. Was it?

He did not speak. It was useless to raise hopes that might only have to be

dashed to the ground again. He watched—and watched!

Harry Wharton rose. The expression of Mauly's face made his heart throb. Was it possible?

"Mauly!" he breathed.

"Take a squint," said Mauleverer, and he passed the field-glasses to the captain of the *Remove*. "Might be somethin'. Never let your chances like the sunbeams pass you by, you know."

Wharton looked through the glasses. Something—was it a sail?—moved on the western rim of the sea. Was it a sail?

For long, long minutes he watched. Bob Cherry drew in his improvised net—empty—and stepped to his side. Nugent and Johnny Bull and the nabob gathered round him. All of them understood now that there was a gleam of hope. Only Bunter still sat where he was, moaning.

In silence, his heart beating too hard for him to speak, Harry passed the glasses to Bob.

"It's a sail!" breathed Bob.

"Think so?" murmured Mauleverer.

"I'm sure of it."

"The luckfulness is terrific if it is a sail," murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

The glasses passed from hand to hand. Every fellow watched in turn, and as they watched the object in the west grew clearer, and at long, long last there was no doubt—it was a sail!

The juniors looked at one another with deep feelings. It was a sail on that lonely sea; it was a ship with human beings on board; a spot of life and hope in that immensity of despair. Famished, parched, with only one tiny meal remaining on the raft, they saw a sail!

There was no means of approaching it; but, as if to add to their good fortune, it was bearing down on them. Obviously it would not have come into clearer view unless it was approaching. And it was soon so clear that the glasses were not needed; they could see the tall ship with the naked eye.

So far as they could make out it was a cutter. Their thoughts had run at

once to the ketch which they had glimpsed running before the storm that dawn that seemed to them weary weeks ago. But it was not the ketch; it was a vessel coming out of the west—a vessel with a single mast—a cutter. Whatever vessel it was, it was a glad sight to their weary eyes.

"A sail!" said Nugent. "A sail! Oh, I—I—I'd given up hope of ever seeing a sail again, you fellows!"

"Same here," admitted Bob. "But didn't I tell you, while there's life there's jolly old hope? Hurrah!"

"We've got to make them see us," said Harry. "They seem to be coming this way, but if they pass—"

"They shan't!" said Bob. "We've got to signal them somehow. We can bang off the rifle when they get nearer; we've got a few cartridges—"

"If only they come near enough—" breathed Nugent.

"Looks like it," said Harry, his eyes glued to the tall sail, now clear on the sea. "They mightn't see the raft, but they will see the signal we've got at the masthead—they're sure to—"

"And we can all wave something," said Johnny Bull. "Oh gum! Isn't this ripping luck?"

"The ripfulness is—"

"Terrific!" chuckled Bob Cherry. All Bob's exuberant spirits had revived at the sight of the tall sail in the west. "We're all right, old beans! Look at the course they're on; they're more likely to run us down than miss us. They're going to see us soon. Bank on it!"

Every face was bright now. It was a sudden jump from something very near despair to happy hope. It seemed as if fortune was tired of persecuting the Greyfriars castaways. The nearer the cutter came the more accurately they could gauge its course, and the more certain it appeared that it would pass within a short distance of the raft.

They would be seen—they must be seen! And that meant help and rescue—life and not death. Whatever men were on board the cutter, they could not dream of passing castaways on a raft unaided. That thought did not even occur to the juniors. They only needed to be seen to be saved—and they were going to be seen! With every passing moment it was more and more sure that they would be—and must be—seen from the cutter.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Jump up, Bunter!" roared Bob Cherry.

Moan!

"Get on your hind legs, old fat man, and yell!" roared Bob. "Wave something, old podgy bean! This is flag-wagging day!"

Moan!

"A sail!" roared Bob. "Got that, Bunter? A sail! Jump up, you fat duffer! Ain't you interested in sails?"

"Oh!" gasped Bunter.

"Sorry we can't offer you a steamer," grinned Bob. "I know you prefer steamers. But it's a sail—and wind-jammers have food on board, old bean. Think of food and rejoice! Food, old man—food!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter.

He clambered to his feet and turned eager spectacles on the cutter. It was now near enough for even Billy Bunter to see it. His eyes almost popped through his spectacles at it. He seemed hardly able to believe that it was real—as, indeed, the other fellows hardly could! But it was real—and Billy Bunter fairly grinned with glee.

"I—I—I say, you fellows, it—it—it's a ship!" he gurgled.

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"It's a cutter, anyhow," said Bob. "I believe I've seen it before, too; may have put in at Kalua while we were there. Seems sort of familiar."

"By gum, yes!" said Harry, his eyes on the cutter. "I don't remember a cutter coming into the lagoon at Kalua, but I'm sure I've seen that craft. We saw lots on our way out. There was a cutter in the harbour when we stopped at Suva—"

"By gum, that's it!" exclaimed Bob. "I knew I'd seen it! When we got to Suva in the Sunderbund and changed over into the Mindanao that cutter was in the harbour."

"Yaas." Lord Mauleverer nodded. "I remember it now. It's the Sea-Cat."

"Oh crikey!" ejaculated Bunter. "I say, you fellows, if it's that cutter, it's the one that that nigger Popoo got away from, and I helped him; and the captain is a beast—a beast named Parker, or Perkins, or Parsons, or something—"

"Never mind that now! He won't be beast enough to give us the go-by!" said Bob. "Wave something, old fat man! Squeak!"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Yell!" roared Bob.

The cutter was sweeping on, her tall canvas full of wind. It was certain now that, unless she changed her course, she would sweep within little more than a cable's length of the drifting raft. Unless every man on board had his eyes shut, the signal streaming from the raft's masthead must be seen—the juniors themselves must be seen. There was no doubt now; and the whole party waved and shouted and yelled—and waved still more frantically as they saw faces looking over the cutter's rail. It was not hope now, it was certainty—and the raft's crew counted themselves saved. And they waved and shouted, and shouted and waved, with bright faces and light hearts.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

On The Sea-Cat!

VAN DINK stared and stared again; he passed a podgy hand over his piggy eyes and stared once more. He could not believe what the piggy eyes told him. He looked and looked, and still he could not believe.

It was unbelievable—it was impossible—it was an optical illusion! It was anything but what it seemed. How was he to believe that he was looking on the schoolboys who for a week had been deep under the Pacific waters in the scuttled schooner?

The Dutchman had been sprawling idly against the rail of the Sea-Cat when the Lukwe boat-steerer, staring at the floating raft in the offing, drew his attention to it. Then the Dutchman looked idly—but that idle glance became fixed, amazed, dumbfounded.

It was more like a spectral vision than reality. What was happening was impossible—unless the sea could give up its dead!

A raft, with a mast and sail, and a ragged signal fluttering from the masthead; and gathered on the raft six schoolboys standing and one sitting—seven in all—the seven that had, in his fixed belief, gone to the bottom of the Pacific when the Flamingo foundered!

No wonder the freebooter rubbed his piggy eyes and stared, and rubbed them again and stared again! He could not believe what he saw.

They were waving; and he could see that they were shouting, though the wind carried back the sound and it could not be heard on the cutter.

"Ach!" breathed Van Dink. "Ach! Is het mogelijk? Neen, neen—onmogelijk—onmogelijk."

It was minutes before he could realise it. But he had to realise that it was not "onmogelijk"—impossible—for there it was! And the dumbfounded amazement in his face gave place to bitter rage.

He glanced round the cutter's deck. Suloo, the boat-steerer, had seen the raft first—but, after staring at it, he had said nothing. There were two other black Lukwe boys on the cutter, but they had not noticed the castaways yet.

Neither had Peter Parsons, the skipper of the Sea-Cat. Dandy Peter of Lukwe was leaning back in a madeira chair, smoking a cigar, his legs crossed. He was talking to Ysabel Dick, who lounged by the rail also, smoking a cigarette.

Van Dink and the beachcomber had been a good many days on board the Sea-Cat. Dandy Peter had picked them up from the drifting dinghy; but Dandy Peter had not the slightest idea of turning off his course to land them anywhere, and he was sailing for lonely waters. So they were still on the Sea-Cat—and likely to be on the Sea-Cat for a long time to come.

(Continued on next page.)



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That, however, did not ill-suit the two desperadoes. They were ready to take any chance for the sake of being picked up, but certainly they did not want to land at any island where the news of the scuttling of the Flamingo might have reached.

Van Dink was an old acquaintance of the Lukwe sea-lawyer; they had poached pearls and kidnapped Kanakas together in other days. Peter Parsons was not the man to go far out of his way for the sake of an old shipmate who was down on his luck; but he had picked them up, and they had their rations on the cutter, and he had found a change of clothes for them.

Ysabel Dick, in a suit of Dandy Peter's well-cut ducks, looked very different from the outcast who had combed the beach of Kalua.

But in the days that had passed since the scuttling of the Flamingo, the beachcomber had not found peace of mind. He was haunted by the mental picture of the last scene on the schooner—of the Flamingo taking the final plunge, and carrying Lord Mauleverer and his friends into the depths of the sea.

No more than Van Dink, did he doubt that that was what had happened—he never thought for a moment of their possible escape.

But though his conscience could not rest, he found some sort of comfort in telling himself that it was not his deed: that he would have undone the dastardly work, at all costs, but for the brutal Dutchman.

Probably, too, he found comfort in the new prospects opening before him—of quitting for ever the South Seas, where he had been a law-breaker and an outcast—of blotting "Ysabel Dick" out of existence, and returning to his own country, under his own name, a rich man.

The Dutchman, looking at him now, grinned a savage, sneering grin: he could hear what Ysabel Dick was saying to the skipper of the Sea-Cat still in ignorance of the raft in the offing.

"If you'd make Honolulu—" the man from Ysabel was saying, and Dandy Peter laughed over his cigarette.

"Not by a thousand miles!" he answered.

"I want to pick up a ship for home, without going back to the islands!" muttered the beachcomber. "I've got reasons—"

"I've guessed them!" said Peter Parsons, coolly. "You've not told me how you came adrift in that dinghy—and it's no business of mine: but I reckon you'd not have liked me to land you at Suva or Samoa."

"No!" muttered the outcast of Kalua.

"I reckoned not! No business of mine—I'm not High Commissioner of the Pacific! I'll land you anywhere on my course—you've had a chance already—I put in at Lululo to shelter from the storm—but I'm on a long trip now, and it doesn't take me anywhere near the Hawaiian Islands. I don't go a cable's length off my course for any man in the Pacific."

"I'd make it worth your while—" Dandy Peter laughed again.

"I picked you up in rags," he said. "But I'm open to do business! It will cost three hundred pounds to charter this cutter for a run up to Honolulu. Got it in the pockets of those trousers I've lent you?"

"I've nothing, as you know," scowled Ysabel Dick. "But ashore at Honolulu I can raise the wind—there's a fortune waiting for me at home."

"I've heard that one!" said Parsons banteringly.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,594.

Ysabel Dick gave him a black look. It was true—at least, he believed that it was true. But the Lukwe skipper did not believe a word of it. He believed that he had two law-breakers on his cutter, anxious to get clear of the islands.

For that, the lawless Lukwe skipper cared nothing. Indeed, his sympathies lay rather with law-breakers than with honest men. But he was not the man to be taken in by a wild tale, or to trust to promises.

"I'll tell you this," said Ysabel Dick, and the Dutchman grinned again as he listened. "We came off in that dinghy from a vessel that went down—and it carried down with it a person who stood between me and one of the largest fortunes in England. It was not by my deed—it was Van Dink's—I would have saved the boy, and lost all! But there it is—he is gone, and I stand in his place—once I am out of this."

Dandy Peter gave him a curious, penetrating look. Doubting and mocking as he was, he was a little impressed by the beachcomber's earnestness.

"If that's true, put it plain!" he said. "Prove it, and I stand by you! I've let you stick on my packet, instead of chucking you ashore at the first stop—and it's not my custom to help lame ducks. I'd be glad to make something out of it. The boy's name?"

Ysabel Dick did not answer.

"Your own name?"

The beachcomber did not speak, and Dandy Peter laughed again.

"Wash it out," he said. "Do you take me for a fool?"

"It's true!" muttered the beachcomber. "But I can tell you no more—I'm leaving no link between the name I now bear, and the one I shall bear at home. It is enough that Van Dink knows, and will stick to me like a leech. But I tell you that, once landed at Honolulu—"

"You will never see Honolulu in this packet," grinned Dandy Peter. "Cards on the table, and I will judge for myself. But I do not buy yams hidden in a basket, as the Kanakas say."

Van Dink broke in.

"Ach! Tell him all, you fool—and if you do not tell him, I will tell him. He must know now, if he is to stand by us, or all is lost. Look, fool, look!" And the Dutchman pointed over the Sea-Cat's low rail.

The beachcomber gave him an angry stare, and then looked. And, as he looked over the shining waves, his face became fixed.

Every vestige of colour was drained from it. He put his hand on the rail to steady himself, or he would have fallen.

Dandy Peter gave him an astonished glance, rose to his feet, and looked across the water. Then he saw the raft—the group of schoolboys, waving, and shouting, though their voices did not reach him. The Sea-Cat was bearing down almost directly on the raft, and in a few minutes more he must have seen it, had not the Dutchman drawn his attention to it.

The sea-lawyer of Lukwe knitted his brows.

He had two castaways on his vessel, and it was not his custom to help the helpless. There were seven on the raft—a crowd for so small a vessel as the Sea-Cat. It was in Dandy Peter's mind to pass on, unheeding, and leave them to their fate.

But hard-hearted as he was, the sea-lawyer was not quite so hard-hearted as that. He hesitated, and frowned: but he knew that he was going to pick up that crowd of ship-wrecked schoolboys.

But his glance left the raft, and fixed on Ysabel Dick, amazed. The beachcomber, white as chalk, stared at the raft, with bulging eyes.

"His ghost!" muttered the man from Ysabel. "He has come back to haunt me!"

"Are you mad?" asked Dandy Peter. "Who is he—who are they—do you know that crew?"

"Ach! Pull yourself together, weak fool!" snarled the Dutchman, grasping Ysabel Dick by the shoulder, and shaking him savagely. "The boy lives—they escaped from the schooner—he lives, fool, he lives! He lives, and all is lost if he is taken from that raft!"

"He lives!" said the beachcomber, in a hollow voice. "Yes, he lives—and I am glad that he lives! You dog, give up your dream of wealth that will never come to me now he lives, and he shall be saved!"

And throwing Van Dink's hand roughly aside, the beachcomber leaned over the rail, and waved to the crew on the raft.

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

Abandoned!

"GREAT gad!" gasped Lord Mauleverer.

"That villain!" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

"Oh!" gasped Bob.

The waving, the shouting, in the Greyfriars raft, ceased abruptly. With something like horror in their faces, the juniors stared at the face that looked over the rail of the cutter.

Hitherto, they had only seen two faces looking—the black face of the boat-steerer, and another, a fat, bearded face, that turned away before they recognised it: but the face that now looked at them, from the Sea-Cat, as the cutter rushed closer, they recognised, and knew.

"Ysabel Dick!" groaned Nugent.

It was their enemy—the beachcomber of Kalua: the bitter enemy of Lord Mauleverer, and in consequence, of his friends; the man who, with Van Dink, had left them to perish on the Flamingo.

The man who had left them to perish, was not likely to save them.

It was a crushing blow.

That the cutter was the Sea-Cat that they had once seen at Suva; that its skipper was Peter Parsons, said to be one of the most reckless adventurers on the wild island of Lukwe, they knew, already. But whatever he was, he could not pass by famished castaways on a drifting raft—that was unthinkable. They had never doubted for a moment that they would be picked up by the cutter, now that it was certain that they must be seen. But the sight of their old enemy changed all that.

"We're done!" muttered Johnny Bull. "That scoundrel—that villain—we're done."

They stood, for some moments, as if stunned. Then Lord Mauleverer waved again. Billy Bunter, who had not recognised the face over the side of the cutter, was still waving and squeaking.

"No good, Mauly, old man—with that villain there, and the other villain, too, you can bank on that!" muttered Bob.

"Begad!" murmured Lord Mauleverer. "I thought for a minute it was all up, when I saw that blighter! Who'd have expected to see him again? But it ain't his ship, old beans—it can't be—we know that it's the cutter we saw at Suva—wait till we catch the skipper's eye—"

"Oh!" said Harry.



Lord Mauleverer pointed. The Famous Five gathered round, gazing in deep silence at the mark in the sand—the unmistakable outline of a human foot. Were the inhabitants of the island friendly—or cannibals?

"They must have picked up the dinghy!" said Mauleverer. "I dare say both those scoundrels are on board, and they won't be glad to see us—but the matter can't be in their hands, so far as I can see. They can't be anything but passengers on that packet."

"Oh!" repeated Harry. "By gum, you're right, old man!"

The sight of their old enemy's face had had almost a stunning effect on the castaways, changing hope at a blow to despair. From Van Dink and Ysabel Dink they could not suppose for a moment that they had help to expect. But Mauleverer was right; it was very unlikely that either of the desperadoes was in command of the Sea-Cat, and it was on the man who was in command that their hopes depended.

Hope was not dead yet!

They waved again, and shouted. To their amazement, the man at the cutter's side was waving back. It was Ysabel Dick—there was no doubt about that, though there was a change for the better in his looks; it was the outcast of Kalua. But he was waving, and he was shouting, too, and they caught the words that came down the wind:

"Stand by to be picked up!"

The wind, which drove their own voices back, brought Ysabel Dick's to their ears. They heard every word in amazement. From the skipper of the Sea-Cat they would have expected such a call; from the beachcomber of Kalua, never.

"Did you hear that?" gasped Bob.

"After all, that brute was not such a scoundrel as the other brute," said Bob. "It was the other brute's doing that we were left to sink on the Flamingo. His game was to maroon us!"

"That's his game now, perhaps!" said Harry. "But—"

"Better that than what's coming to us on this raft!" said Bob in a low

voice. "And we can kick for ourselves, old man!"

"Yes, yes!"

"There's the Dutchman!"

Van Dink's fat, heavy, bearded face was seen beside that of the waving beachcomber. He grasped Ysabel Dick's arm, his face red with rage.

The juniors watched, with beating hearts. The cutter was near enough now for them to read the looks on the faces over the side.

They could see—it was plain enough now—that the beachcomber, whatever his motive, desired to pick them up from the raft, and that the Dutchman was savagely opposing him.

"Oh, look!" breathed Nugent.

They saw Ysabel Dick half-turn and drive his fist into the Dutchman's face. Then he resumed waving as the bulky Dutchman staggered out of sight across the cutter's deck.

"There's the skipper!" breathed Bob.

A slim, dapper figure in ducks stood in full sight—Dandy Peter, of Lukwe, whom they had seen lounging on the Sea-Cat in the harbour at Suva long ago.

His eyes were fixed on them.

They could read indecision in his face. Why he was undecided was a mystery to the juniors. He could see their distress; he must know that their lives were at stake.

But hope that had revived began to sink again.

"I say, you fellows, why don't they stop?" gasped Bunter. "They can jolly well see us! Why don't they stop?"

No one answered Bunter. The Sea-Cat was quite close now; it needed only a twist of the black man's hand at the tiller to bring it sweeping down to the raft. But if it did not change its course it would sweep on, passing the raft at the distance of under a cable's length. In a very few minutes they would know the worst; but they hardly dared to

think of the possibility that the Lukwe cutter would sweep on and leave them to their fate.

It would not—it could not! Why should it? Peter Parsons was skipper; it was for him to give orders—not for the two scoundrels he had picked up from the Flamingo's dinghy. And of those two, one was willing that they should be picked up; only the Dutchman was as savage and ruthless as the tiger-shark that lurked under the lee of the raft.

They saw Van Dink again—his bulky form towering over the dapper seafarer of Lukwe—talking, gesticulating, Dandy Peter listening to him, with undecided face. He was urging the Lukwe skipper to pass the raft by; they could guess that much easily enough. But what reason could he give for such an act of inhumanity? Why was the Sea-Cat's skipper listening to him at all?

"They must save us!" breathed Nugent. "They must—they must!"

But the juniors ceased to wave or to call. They watched the strange scene on the gliding cutter with fixed eyes and heavy hearts.

It was impossible—it was surely impossible—that any man with a human heart in his breast could pass them by—leave them to dreadful death on the lonely sea. Yet from the look that was gathering on the face of Dandy Peter they dreaded that it was so.

They saw him at length give a curt nod in reply to what the Dutchman was saying and step back from the rail. He had made no sign to the steersman, and the cutter was gliding on, passing by the raft.

Then Ysabel Dick turned from the rail, his eyes on Parsons. They saw that he was speaking; they saw Dandy Peter shake his head and shrug his

shoulders. Then the beachcomber turned towards the steersman, leaped on him, wrenched him away, and grasped the tiller.

"Oh!" gasped Bob, watching.

The others gazed in breathless silence.

Suloo, the boat-steerer of the Sea-Cat, staggered away; the beachcomber was gripping the tiller. But before he could put it over, both Dandy Peter and the Dutchman grasped him.

He was wrenched away and sent spinning on the deck.

The Dutchman grasped the tiller. He kept the Sea-Cat on its course. Parsons, with an angry, scowling face, was shouting. They saw Suloo grasp the beachcomber as he would have scrambled up, and pin him down to the deck. The cutter swept on.

"I say, you fellows, it's passing us!" gasped Bunter. "I say, they must have seen us! I say—Oh crikey!"

"You scoundrel!" roared Bob Cherry after the cutter, shaking his fist at the grinning face of the Dutchman looking back.

Harry Wharton clenched his hands.

How, and why, the Dutchman had prevailed on the skipper of the Sea-Cat to abandon them he could not guess, but he had. That was plain now. The cutter was running on before the wind, passing a cable's length from the raft; her stern was now turned to the Greyfriars castaways. They could see only one face on board now—the fat, brutal face of Van Dink, staring back over the taffrail, and grinning as he steered.

The Sea-Cat glided on; the Dutchman's face became a blur and disappeared. But the tall sails could still be seen, running on before the wind, sinking to the Pacific. And on the raft was the silence of grim despair.

THE SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER.

The Last Morsel!

SILENCE—dead silence—reigned on the raft as the Sea-Cat grew smaller in the distance.

The juniors watched the sails fading away—the sails they had seen, with such hope, rising from the sea. Even Billy Bunter did not speak.

The fat junior gave one moan of utter misery as he realised that the passing ship was not going to stop for them. Then he slumped down, and sat as if stunned.

The others stood watching. Under the lee of the drifting raft a black fin glided and sank. The shark was still in attendance. But the juniors did not see that dreadful companion of their voyage—their eyes were fixed on the fading sails of the Lukwe cutter.

It was hard to believe that they were abandoned—that a white man had left them to perish. Even yet they could hardly believe that the skipper of the Sea-Cat did not intend to go about and pick them up.

But that delusive hope, if hope it was, had to be given up as the cutter faded away into the east, and finally sank to a blur on the sea-rim. Still they watched it—watched the vanishing of their only hope.

But it was gone at last—vanished from sight. Not a trace remained to be seen of the ship that had passed them and left them to their doom. Once more they were left alone on the lonely sea, and never had the solitude of the Pacific seemed so terrible, so overwhelming, as after the passing of the ship that might have saved them.

They sat down at last, still in grim silence, with hearts like lead. The

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,594.

situation, almost hopeless before, seemed doubly, trebly, hopeless now.

"The villain!" said Bob Cherry huskily, breaking the heavy silence at last. "Oh, the villain!"

"It was the Dutchman!" said Lord Mauleverer quietly. "The other would have picked us up—the beachcomber—if—"

"We're done!" muttered Nugent.

"After all, we're not worse off than before we sighted that rotten cutter!" said Bob, with a dismal attempt at cheerfulness. "We—we—we may have a chance of spotting another sail yet."

"I say, you fellows," came a feeble moan from Billy Bunter—"I say, what are we going to do?"

"Stick it out, old chap!" said Bob. "We'll jolly well spot another ship before long."

"I'm so awfully hungry!" moaned Bunter.

There was no reply to be made to that. To touch the last morsel of food, before they were absolutely driven to it, was out of the question. Billy Bunter's fat cheeks seemed to have fallen in; his eyes were hollow behind his spectacles. The other fellows were feeling bad enough, but they could feel compassion for the fat Owl, who lacked their strength and courage to bear what had to be borne.

Bunter said no more. He was too far gone even for complaining. He lay in a state of misery that might have touched a heart of stone.

The flaming sun went down in the west. Night was a relief from the burning heat, the deadly glare that dazzled the eyes. In the darkness they floated unseen, if there had been an eye to see—they could not even burn a light since the oil was expended.

It was not like the Famous Five to give in, but something very like despair was heavy in their hearts now. The wind freshened in the night, and the raft moved more quickly through the sea. But if they looked back, they could make out a dim shape under the starlit water. The shark was following—led by its dreadful instinct for prey. They still hoped, perhaps—yet the thought was in their minds that the shark knew!

Hardly a word was spoken as the raft slid on over the shadowy waters. Dawn came again—the brilliant sunrise of the Pacific.

They scanned the sea—with hopeless eyes. Blue sea, stretching on every side till it met blue sky—nothing more, save an albatross winging far away across the blue. No sail—no sign of land—only the infinitude of rolling waters, the infinitude of the heavens.

The last tin of beef was opened.

Its contents were portioned as before. Billy Bunter did not sit up; he lay helplessly on the blanket, as he gobbled his share. Then he closed his eyes, but not to sleep. Low, faint moans came from the unhappy Owl. There was half a mug of water each—the water was running very low now. And the last of the food was gone.

The Famous Five ate their little portions slowly—as slowly as they could. Lord Mauleverer sat with his chunk in his fingers—for several minutes, looking at it. Then he rolled over, turning his back on the other fellows. They did not see him wrap that greasy chunk—more precious than a nugget of solid gold—in a handkerchief and slip it into his pocket.

The terrible day wore on—with dazzling sunshine and burning heat—hardly relieved by the wind that drove the raft through the water. The wind itself seemed almost to burn.

Bob Cherry had put his improvised

net over the side again. Now he let out an extra length of rope, to let the net drag lower.

The raft suddenly jolted, as something brushed under one of the submerged casks at the corners. The rope trailing over the side was seen to stir and twirl.

"A catch!" breathed Bob. He dragged in the rope.

It twirled on the raft—the net no longer attached to the end. Bob stared at it blankly.

"The shark!" muttered Harry.

"Oh!"

Evidently the following shark had seen the net and snapped at it. It was gone.

Bob did not trouble to make another. It was futile, and even Bob Cherry's strength was failing him now, and he was growing listless and slow. When they looked at one another, the juniors could read in each other's faces the end of hope.

No word came from Bunter now—and it would have been almost a relief to hear him complain. He lay half unconscious, his eyes staring behind his spectacles. He was long past complaint, and it came oddly into Harry Wharton's mind that he would have been glad to hear the querulous voice grouching. But the unhappy Owl had no strength left even to moan. He lay like a log, with glassy eyes.

The endless day wore to an end, and again there was night—a night of glittering stars, the Southern Cross blazing from the dark blue. Endless day, and endless night—and endless day again. Once more, bright, sunny dawn!

Harry Wharton felt himself totter, when he dragged himself to his feet to scan the sea! He gave one long, hopeless look, and sank down on the raft again.

Billy Bunter stirred. He sat up, rubbing his eyes, and then replacing his spectacles, with a feeble hand that was not so fat as of old.

"I say, you fellows!" came faintly from Bunter.

"Yes, old chap!" said Harry gently.

"I say, I'm hungry! Are you fellows teeing in the study?" asked Bunter.

"Wha-a-t?"

Bunter blinked round at startled faces. He gave a peevish grunt.

"I mean to say, if you're teeing in the study, I'm ready! I was going to ask you fellows to tea, but the fact is, I've been disappointed about a postal order!"

"Bunter, old chap!" gasped Bob, in horror.

"Poor old kid!" murmured Lord Mauleverer. He groped in his pocket, where that greasy chunk was packed in his handkerchief.

"I say, you fellows, if you've got nothing in the study, I'll get along to Mauly's study!" said Bunter. "I can tell you, I'm jolly hungry—and thirsty, too. I'm not often short of money, as you know, but the fact is, I'm absolutely stony at the present moment, owing to being disappointed about a postal order. It's a bit odd that it hasn't come, as it was from one of my titled relations."

The juniors could only gaze at him. The hapless fat Owl was wandering. Perhaps it was better for him—he was no longer conscious that he was on the drifting raft, floating in the immensity of the Pacific, abandoned to death. His helpless suffering body lay there, but his wandering mind was back at Greyfriars School.

"I say, you fellows, where are you?" came the fat junior's feeble tones. "I think I want some new specs—I don't seem to see you!"

"We're here, old fellow!" said Harry.

"Well, I can't see you!" said Bunter irritably. "Playing tricks on a fellow! I'd rather tea with you fellows—I never get enough, really, in Study No. 7. Tuddy's mean. If he tea's out, he never thinks of a chap in the study! Look here, what's the matter? I say, you fellows, I think I'm going to be ill! I'm feeling jolly queer."

"Buck up, old chap!" said Bob Cherry miserably.

"What I want to know is this—are you having tea in the study? I suppose you can tell a fellow!" mumbled Bunter. "If not, I'll go and see Mauly! Know if Mauly's in his study?"

"I'm here, old thing!" said Lord Mauleverer softly. He moved across the raft towards Bunter, taking something from his pocket.

The Famous Five watched him in silence. It was twenty-four hours since a fragment of food had passed their lips. They knew now that it was forty-eight hours since a fragment had passed Mauly's, as they saw him take the greasy chunk of canned beef, and put it to Bunter's mouth.

Bunter gobbled. "Oh, Mauly, old man!" murmured Bob. "Mauly, you old ass!"

Mauleverer grinned faintly. "I can stand it better than Bunter!" he said.

Small as it was, that morsel of food evidently made Bunter better. He ceased to mumble wandering words, laid down on the raft, and went to sleep. He slept—while the others, with despairing eyes, watched the shining sea.

THE EIGHTEENTH CHAPTER.

Land!

BOB CHERRY stirred. It was night again—starry night. How they had lived through that dreadful day, the schoolboys hardly knew. But they lived—weak with hunger, tortured with thirst, knowing that the end was near—that it must be near. At sunset, the last drop of water had been shared, scarcely wetting their lips. The new day, when it came, had to be faced without food or water—and if it was not the last, it must be very near the last.

At night, they lay down in silence. Billy Bunter had not spoken again—his sleep seemed to have passed into unconsciousness. It was better so, perhaps—and the other fellows could have envied him.

They lay about the raft, with hardly the strength to stir. Bob Cherry, sturdiest fellow in the Greyfriars Remove, had to make an effort, to drag himself to a sitting posture, as he felt the raft suddenly shake.

He thought at once of the following shark. For days and nights that dreadful fish had followed, tireless. Now, as the raft shook under a sudden shock, it seemed to Bob that the demon of the sea was attacking, as the other shark had done, long days ago, that seemed centuries ago. His hand groped to the rifle.

Not that it was likely to be of much use; he knew that he could not have hit a house, in his present state, even if he could have kept the rifle to his shoulder.

As he sat, there came another bump! Then he realised that it was from the fore end of the raft that the shock came; and the shark was astern—at all events, had been astern till now.

It was not the shark! It was something else upon which the raft had struck—some floating driftwood, perhaps, or perhaps some rock or reef of the Paci-

Bump; For a third time the raft thudded and receded. In the starlight a glimmer of white foam came to Bob's eyes. It was some coral reef below the surface of the sea, upon which the raft had bumped.

A sunken reef—there were thousands such. Bob struggled to his knees. To push off from the rock, to save the raft from upsetting, was his thought. Life was worth little now; but the thought of the shearing jaws that lurked in the water was still terrible.

But his strength was gone. He gained his knees with the help of one hand on the mast. He could not get on his feet. The strong and sturdy limbs were weak as an infant's.

He gritted his teeth, to shut back a groan. One of the recumbent figures on the raft stirred.

"That you, Bob?"

It was Harry Wharton's voice, little more than a hoarse whisper.

"Yes. We're bumping on some rock," muttered Bob. "Didn't you feel the bump?"

"I—I think so. Yes."

The others had not stirred. Wharton rolled over to look at Bob; but he did not attempt to rise.

Bump! "We've got to shove off somehow," muttered Bob. "If we go over—" He shuddered. "Can you lend a hand, old chap?"

"I—I'll try."

Harry Wharton climbed to his knees. He grasped the mast with both hands and somehow dragged himself to his feet. His dizzy eyes turned on the lines of white foam that glimmered and glistened in the light of the stars.

Then, releasing one hand from the mast, he rubbed his eyes with it and looked again. He saw—unless, as he dreaded, it was a vision of coming delirium—something beyond those lines of foam—something that stood tall and dark and nodded against the starry sky. He rubbed his eyes again, his heart beating thickly. If it was not a vision, if his senses were not leaving him, it was a tall palm-tree that he saw against the stars.

He gave a gasping cry.

"Bob, look! Oh, look, old man!" "What—"

"Land!" panted Harry Wharton. "Land!"

Bob Cherry gave a gasp. The strength that seemed to have left him for ever came back at that word. In an instant he was on his feet beside his chum, holding on to the mast, staring.

"Land!" he breathed. "Harry—"

"Look!" Tall and dark stood the palm—distant but clear in outline against the glittering stars. Bob gazed at it with almost incredulous eyes. Hope was so dead that it seemed impossible that land was sighted at last! But it was a palm-tree, and where a palm-tree grew was no mere sunken coral reef—but land! Land!

"Oh!" breathed Bob. His head almost swam for some

(Continued on next page.)



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moments! Land—and all it meant; if they could reach it! Land—directly in the way of the drifting raft! Land!

Bump!

The raft struck again, more gently, and receded. It was only a sunken coral reef that it struck, but they knew now—almost every island in the Pacific had its reef—it was no lonely rock; it was the coral reef of a coral island that the raft had drifted on.

In rough weather the raft would have crashed to fragments on the coral. But the night was calm—the sea like a lake, only ruffled by the light wind. It was the current that was running them on the reef—but the contact was light, and growing lighter.

For some moments it puzzled them—and then they understood. Within the reef lay the lagoon, and the tide was going in. It was the tide that was bumping them on the sunken reef—and, as it deepened, the reef was more deeply covered, and the raft bumped more lightly, scarcely touching the coral.

Bump again!

This time the raft did not recede. It was over the sunken coral, and the casks fastened under it were bumping on top of the reef.

"We're going in——" breathed Bob.

"On the tide——" said Harry.

"Didn't I say while there's life there's hope!" said Bob huskily. "Wake up, you fellows! Franky—Mauly—Johnny—Inky—Bunter, old fat bean! Land! LAND!"

"Land!" shouted Harry Wharton. It seemed to him that new life had come into his veins and his limbs. "Land!"

He bent over Lord Mauleverer. Johnny Bull, Frank Nugent, and Hurree Janset Ram Singh tottered to their feet. It was as if the magic word brought back life and strength.

Mauleverer made an effort to rise, and sank back again. Wharton grasped him and helped him to his feet.

"Land!" he panted. "Mauly, old man—land!"

"Oh, begad!" murmured Lord Mauleverer. "Jolly good luck, what?"

"Hold on to the mast, old chap—hold on! Look!"

Bump, bump! came from under the raft. The deepening tide was carrying it over the low reef. It bumped on jutting coral as it went, and jolted and tipped—but it floated on, the reef lower and lower under the water beneath it, till at last it floated clear.

"Land!" breathed Frank Nugent.

His eyes seemed to feast on the stretch of level water ahead—the lagoon within the reef—on the white beach that glimmered beyond, the palms that nodded over the beach.

"Land!" repeated Johnny Bull. "I—I suppose we're not dreaming this?"

"Bunter old man—land!"

Bunter did not stir. But six fellows were on their feet—with eager eyes on the shelving beach, to which the raft was drifting across the starry lagoon. What land it was, whether it was inhabited or not, they neither knew nor cared—it was land! And every heart beat and throbbed with new life and hope. Land—land at last!

Bump!

The raft was bumping on a shelving beach of softest sand. The tide carried it up the sand, and left it there, receding. Another wave came flooding in and pushed it higher. The juniors scrambled off. They would have dragged the raft beyond high watermark, but their strength was not equal

to the effort. But Bob Cherry knotted the end of a rope to the mast and carried the rope in his hand as he scrambled ashore. He scrambled to the nearest palm and made the rope fast.

"Bunter, old man!"

The fat junior neither spoke nor stirred. Four fellows gathered, with the water washing up to their knees, grasped him, and with a combined effort dragged him from the raft, up the shelving beach, and landed him in the sand. The voyage of the Greyfriars raft was ended.

THE NINETEENTH CHAPTER.

On The Island!

PLOP, plop!

The castaways lay on the soft sand, spent by their last efforts.

Hunger and thirst had so sapped their strength that they hardly knew how they had been able to scramble off the raft and drag Bunter after them.

Bunter lay unconscious. The other fellows lay exhausted. They could hardly have reached out for food and water, their direst needs, had they been at hand.

Bob Cherry was the first to stir. The effort of making the raft fast had made him almost giddy, and for long, long minutes he lay in the sand without motion. But he stirred at last.

Plop, plop!

He knew that sound—it was the sound of falling coconuts, dropping in the wind as it shook the palms. Back of the beach, the coconut palms grew in thick groves, nodding in the wind from the sea, and every few minutes there was the sound of a "plop" as the ripe nuts fell.

The sturdiest fellow in the Greyfriars Remove, who had hardly ever known what it was like to feel really tired, struggled to his knees with incessant effort, and crawled up the sand. He crawled and groped in the starlight, and his hand closed on a fallen nut.

The others started a little at the sound of a loud crack. It was the husk of the nut cracking on a chunk of coral.

Carefully Bob removed part of the cracked husk, opened his pocket-knife, and sliced the end of the nut. The interior was full of the "milk" of the nut—and he took one sip—a sip that was sweeter than the fabled nectar of the gods. But he took no more—he crawled back to his friends, carrying the nut with great care, every movement costing him an effort.

"Mauly old man!" breathed Bob.

There was enough in the nut for a sip all round. Then Bob cut it to pieces with his knife, and they chewed.

The change that one coconut made in the whole party was amazing. There were more at hand—plenty more—when they had strength to stir—and strength was coming back.

Bob, with his mouth full of nut, crawled again. He opened another nut and crept back to Bunter—lying like a log in the sand. The fat junior did not stir—his eyes were shut, and he breathed faintly. Bob lifted his head and placed the nut to his mouth.

Insensible as he was, Bunter swallowed the juice instinctively. It seemed to soak into his dry, cracked lips and parched mouth.

His eyes opened behind his spectacles.

He grunted.

It was not a musical sound, but all ears were glad to hear the sound that indicated returning animation.

Wharton and Johnny Bull were moving now. After the hunger and thirst of the raft they lay where Nature had spread, almost at their feet, abundant supplies of food and drink. It needed only an effort—and they made the effort.

In a few minutes more nuts were cracked, and every fellow had one to his mouth, drinking the juice.

"Begad!" murmured Lord Mauleverer, with a deep sigh of contentment. "That's good!"

"The goodness is terrific!" murmured Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

"Good ain't the word—it's gorgeous!" said Bob. "It's splendacious—in fact, splendiferous! Did I mention to you chaps that while there was life there was hope?"

They gathered nuts and sat up round a pile of them. It seemed incredible to them that they would ever be able to satisfy their thirst. But it was satisfied at last, and the rich fruit of the coconuts relieved the gnawing pangs of hunger.

Colour came back into haggard, pallid faces—brightness into sunken eyes. Strength came back into limbs that had felt hardly capable of movement.

"I say, you fellows!" Bunter spoke at last.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" trilled Bob Cherry.

"Gimme some more."

"Here you are!"

"Don't over-do it, Bunter, old bean," said Lord Mauleverer mildly. "Better not pack too much after being empty so long—'tain't good."

Gobble, gobble!

"That's a tip," said Bob. "Better go easy on the grub, at first, you fellows. Go easy, Bunter, old man."

Bunter's gobbling ceased for a second. "Idiot!" he said.

Then he gobbled again.

Bunter, evidently, had no use for moderation, now that there was food on hand. He gobbled, and gobbled, and gobbled.

The other fellows lay down in the sand again, to sleep. They could sleep now—thirst satisfied, hunger satisfied, new life and new hope in their hearts. They were all fast asleep, pillowed in the soft sand, long before Bunter had finished gobbling. Then, at length, a rumbling snore was added to the steady breathing of six sleepers.

The sun was high in the heavens, shining down on the blue lagoon and the rolling Pacific, and the chorus of wild birds in the woods going strong when their eyes opened again.

THE TWENTIETH CHAPTER.

Footprints In The Sand!

"**H**ALLO, hallo, hallo!" roared Bob Cherry.

Five fellows sat up and rubbed their eyes.

It was a bright and glorious morning. The tide was out—the raft high and dry. Beyond the smiling lagoon, the coral reef over which the raft had floated, in the night, was up to the surface. Sea-gulls circled and screamed over it. The white beach glowed in the sunshine.

Bunter was still snoring. The juniors left him to snore, while they walked down to the lagoon for a dip—with a wary eye open for sharks—and then gathered for a breakfast of coconuts and bananas. Now, that it was daylight,

(Continued on page 28.)

DOING THE GREYFRIARS WALK WITH—

The GREYFRIARS GUIDE



ALL AROUND GREYFRIARS. Friardale, The Village

(1)

Friardale Village, quaint and old,
Is standing on its sleepy byway,
Where busy buses ne'er have rolled,
And chickens use the public highway.
The traffic problem is acute,
When sheep and cows are gonged for speeding,
And ducklings always have to hoot,
While pigs must grunt before proceeding!

(2)

Six hundred years ago, the church
Was newly built and dedicated,
But now you'd have to make a search
To find a place more antiquated.
The vicar, Mr. Lambe, is keen
On having chats with Quelch and Prouty;
A fine athletic man he's been,
Though now, perhaps, a trifle gouty.

(3)

Half-hidden by a box of eggs
(All genuine antiques) reposes
A little tuckshop, Uncle Clegg's,
Where uncle sits all day and dozes.
When Bunter's hanging round the shop
He quickly wakes and turns quite vicious,
For uncle's home-made ginger-pop
To thirsty Bunter is delicious!



AFTER SCHOOL HOURS Hazel's High Hopes.

When Peter Hazeldene one day
Received a birthday present,
A fiver from his rich Aunt May,
He thought it very pleasant,
For he had got a little plan
About a horse named Dreamy Dan!

A racing expert from the course,
Whose naps were always certain touches,
Had said to Hazel that the horse
Could almost win the race on crutches!
So Hazel sought this racing man
And put five quid on Dreamy Dan!

This man of expert racing news
Was willing to accept the money,
Which (seeing he was bound to lose)
Might strike a normal chap as funny;
But maybe he knew better than
To place his shirt on Dreamy Dan!

But Hazel never had a doubt,
His spirits soared up like a rocket!
That evening he would walk about
With twenty quidlets in his pocket!
He waited eagerly to scan
The winner's name—viz., Dreamy Dan!

But truth obliges me to state
That when the other horses started
One gee-gee stopped to ruminare,
And stood there while the rest departed;
In fact, alas, the race began
And finished without Dreamy Dan!

The racing man with sombre look
Deplored the foolish horse's action,
But in his bulging pocket-book
Stuffed Hazel's note with satisfaction!
And Hazel hates that Also Ran
Who didn't run—viz., Dreamy Dan!

THE GREYFRIARS ALPHABET

HERBERT TREVOR

The Lancashire Lad of the Remove.

T is for TREVOR, Herbert T.,
No limelight character is he;
Like Linley, Trevor comes from Lancs,
But unlike Linley, in the banks
He has a hefty lot of dough.
His father made it years ago
When Lancashire was full of work,
And mills were spinning in the mark,



And cotton fabrics by the mile
Were made in fine and faultless style.
Let's hope those days come quickly back
When mills will be no longer slack.
Like Smithy, Trevor's rather hard,
And likes to think himself a "card,"
But actually he has no luck,
For he's without the Bounder's pluck.

ANSWER to PUZZLE

Study No. 14, with BULL, FIELD,
and FISH.



A WEEKLY BUDGET OF FACT AND FUN

By
THE GREYFRIARS
RHYMESTER

GREYFRIARS GRINS

A book of maxims says: "If you know you'll have to do something you dislike, force yourself to practise it beforehand." I understand that Ponsonby, of Highcliffe, is painting his clothes with broad arrows.

Coker of the Fifth "hopes to play some cricket" in the vac. After that, of course, he'll climb Mount Everest.

The summer vac is a hard time for Mrs. Mible, who does no business in the tuckshop. This year, however, she is trying to work up a connection by selling birdseed to hungry pigeons.

PUZZLE PAR

Peter Todd painted a "problem picture," showing a bullock, while drinking at a stream which ran through his meadow, gnawing a trout he had caught. It is supposed to represent a Remove study. Which is it?

Answer at foot of column 2.

Loder, complaining of the heat, said that yesterday "the perspiration ran down his face." Remove fellows also "run down" Loder's face.

Mr. Meek, the Courtfield drapery store owner, has just been made a magistrate. When Coker was brought before him for speeding on his motor-bike, he fined Coker 9/11 $\frac{1}{2}$.

The latest gas-masks are guaranteed to stop the most powerful gas. We'll have to wear one while talking to Prout.

Owing to the risk of climbing down the ivy, Skinner is thinking of petitioning the Head to fit rope-ladders to the dormitory windows.

A mouse ran into the Remove Form-room one day. It left immediately, richer by a 100 lines.

they found bananas as plentiful as coconuts. And the daylight revealed a rippling stream of water that flowed down from the interior of the island, and into the lagoon, hardly fifty yards from the spot where they had landed. Which was the happiest of discoveries for the castaways.

Breakfast over, Bob gave Bunter a shake. The fat junior was very soon wide awake and partaking of a hearty breakfast.

"I say, you fellows, where are we?" asked Bunter, at last. "I don't seem to remember getting off the raft. Was I asleep?"

"Sort of!" said Harry. "We helped you off, old chap."

"Queer that I never woke up—I'm a rather light sleeper—"

"Eh!"

"Well, I'm jolly glad we're on shore," said Bunter, with his mouth full. "I was jolly well fed up with that putrid raft, I can tell you. Where have we got to?"

"An island of some sort!" answered Harry. "Somewhere in the Pacific Ocean, that's all we know, so far."

"You can ask the people who live here, I suppose!" said Bunter, blinking at him.

"We haven't seen anybody, so far."

"Oh crikey! You don't mean to say we're landed on a desert island?" exclaimed Bunter, in dismay. "How are we going to get off, then?"

"Too jolly glad to get on, to worry about getting off, yet!" said Bob Cherry, with a chuckle. "We've had a lot of luck, Bunter."

"Well, that's all very well!" said Bunter. "But we can't stick here for ever, I suppose. Gimme some more bananas. I say, you fellows, I can tell you how to find out whether anybody lives on this island!"

"Go it," said Bob. "That's just what we want to find out, old pipin."

"You've still got that rifle," said Bunter, "and there's some cartridges in it. Well, bang it off, and if there's anybody about, they'll hear, see?"

"Oh, my hat!" said Bob. "Ain't Bunter simply packed with bright ideas, you fellows?"

"Well, I think of things, you know!" said Bunter. "I've got brains. Look here, no need to waste time about it! If there's anybody living on this island, the sooner we know, the better."

This stuff is all very well, when a fellow's starving—but what I want is some food."

"That may be what the people on this island want, if there are any," grinned Bob. "We want to find out just what sort of sportsmen they are, before we do any publicity stunts."

Billy Bunter jumped.

"Oh crikey! I say, you fellows, d-d-d-do you think this may be a cannibal island? Oh crumbs! I—I—I say, mind you don't let that rifle go off!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The castaways were not likely, in any case, to expend their last half-dozen cartridges in "banging off" the rifle to attract the attention of the inhabitants of that unknown island—if any! If there were any inhabitants, they were certain to be South-Sea natives, in so remote a spot, and much more likely to prove foes than friends. Those last few cartridges might be badly wanted, for all the castaways knew as yet. And they certainly did not want to advertise their arrival until they knew whether they had natives to deal with.

"Cheer up, old grampus!" said Bob. "No sign of anybody so far, at any rate! We're going along the beach to explore."

And leaving Billy Bunter packing away the foodstuffs, such as they were, the Famous Five and Lord Mauleverer went along the beach—eager to discover whether there were any signs of habitation on the island. Harry Wharton put the rifle under his arm, and Bob Cherry the axe on his shoulder. But there seemed to be no sign of natives.

They followed the beach for a considerable distance, the shining lagoon on one hand, the shady coconut woods on the other. For more than a mile, they walked in a solitude, and a silence broken only by the calling of the gulls out on the reef.

Then Lord Mauleverer came to a halt with a grave and thoughtful expression on his face.

"Tired, old bean?" asked Bob. "No good overdoing it—we're not fit yet. Looks as if we've got this jolly old island to ourselves, you fellows."

"Looks like it!" agreed Harry. "If there's any natives, they must be on the other side, I think. But it looks as if it's uninhabited."

"Good for us if it is!" remarked Nugent. "You haven't forgotten those blighters in the canoe."

"Hardly! Coming back, Mauly?"

"Yaas, I think we'd better get back," said Mauleverer thoughtfully.

"Mauly's got something in his noddle," said Bob, staring at his lordship. "What are you thinking about, Mauly?"

"I was thinkin' about jolly old Robinson Crusoe—"

"We're in his line of business now," said Bob, laughing. "But what about jolly old Crusoe specially?"

"I mean, when he spotted that footprint in the sand on his island," explained Lord Mauleverer. "I sort of remembered that, you know, so I've been lookin'—"

"You don't mean—"

"Yaas!"

"Oh, my hat!"

Lord Mauleverer pointed. The Famous Five knew now why he had stopped with that grave expression on his face. In a deep silence they looked at a mark in the soft sand—the clear, unmistakable outline of a naked foot!

It was only a few yards from the track of their own boots. And now that they noticed it, they could discern other similar footprints—which told that a man with bare feet had crossed the beach from the lagoon to the wood! In silence, they gazed at the tell-tale footprints—and then looked round them at the solitary beach, the silent woods.

All was silent, all was solitary; the juniors might have believed themselves alone on that speck of land, set lonely in the midst of the unending sea. But the footprints in the sand told their own tale.

"By gum!" said Bob at last.

"Better get back," murmured Mauleverer. "We've found out what we wanted to know—and we've left Bunter—"

"Come on!" said Harry.

There were natives on the island, they knew that now: whether some peaceful tribe or some savage horde of cannibals they had yet to learn. In silence they hurried back to the camp.

THE END.

(Look out for another feast of thrills in next week's exciting yarn: "BIG CHIEF BUNTER!" You'll vote it a real tip-topper, chums!)

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KONDEMMED TO DETH

Step out with Doc. Birchmall and the chums of St. Sam's in another instalment of our Ace-high serial.

By DICKY NUGENT

"Meray!" The cry rang out weirdly across the cave where Jack Jolly & Co. and Doctor Birchmall were the prisoners of the smugglers.

It was the Head, of course, who was begging for mercy. Jack Jolly & Co. would have scorned to ask favours of the ruffians who had seized them.

The smugglers larked gloatingly as they heard the Head's tearful plea. "Ho, ho, ho! 'Meray' eh?"

jeered one of the black-hearted scoundrels. "You'll get a fat lot of mercy when we get you afore the kaptin on the skooner!"

"Pipe down, you dog! They're not going on the skooner!"

It was Mr. Lickham who rapped out these words. The Fourth Form-master, who was earning a little spare-time cash as foreman of the smugglers, faced his followers with a fierce frown on his face. The smugglers stared at him in surprize.

"Ho, they ain't, ain't they?" growled one of them. "That's just where you're mistaken, mate. These 'ere swabs 'ave got to die the deth. You said so yourself."

Mr. Lickham cullered slitley in the dim light of the ship's lantern that hung on the wall of the cave. Although he had said that to keep on the right side of the smugglers, he really had no intention whatever of seeing Doctor Birchmall and the Fourth Formers slawtered.

"Well, what of it?" he rasped, glaring fiercely at his suspicious henchmen. "Why waste time taking them back to the skooner? You swabs row back by yourselves and leave them to me."

"No fear we don't!" growled another of the gang. "The skipper allus makes it a rule to do these here jobs hisself. Bring 'em along to the boat, lads!"

"I, I!" "Mutiny, eh?" cried Mr. Lickham, grimly. "You had better remember that you're under my orders

while you're ashore."

"Not when you give us the wrong orders, though, mate!" retorted one of the smugglers, with a brutal lark. "We're takin' these swabs back to the skooner—an' you're comin', too!"

"But I've got to stay and look after the licker!" hooted Mr. Lickham. "That will 'ave to look arter itself, mate! Come on!"

For a moment the Fourth Form-master looked inclined to resist. But it was an impossibil task, and eventually he decided to pretend to fall in with the smugglers again—in the

hoop that he would get a chance of helping the St. Sam's fellows later!

"Perhaps, after all, what you say is right," he said, with a smile. "I'll come with you!"

So Mr. Lickham helped his crew to carry the prisoners along to the boat. When they reached the skooner Dirty Dick, the prisoners' worst fears were realised. They could tell at a glance that the kaptin was a villain of the deepest dye—a scoundrell who had sent many a man to his deth and would not hesitate to do it again!

He gave them a most frightful leer, when they were brought before him on the moonlit deck. "Spies, eh?" he bellowed, with a blud-curdling lark. "They couldn't have come at a better time! We've had a hungry man-eating whale following us about for days. Sink me if I don't give him the meal of his life to-nite!"

A wail of terror went up from Doctor Birchmall.

"Mersy, kaptin! Don't throw me to the whale, please! Throw in the boys, if you like, but leave me out!"



The GREYFRIARS HERALD

No. 308.

EDITED BY FISHER T. ETON FISH.

September 3rd, 1938.



TUNE IN TO UNCLE FISHER

Howya, buddies! Fisher T. Fish calling—Temporary Editor of the "Greyfriars Herald" and, boy, can he edit? Time marches on, folks, and the new term draws noar. But gather ye rosebuds while ye may, as one of your well-known poets put it. No sense in meeting troubles half-way, is there?

When you get back after the vacation, pals, you'll find that your Uncle Fisher has not been wasting his time. No, siree! I'll tell the world I thought out some rip-roaring, dyed-in-the-wool stunts that will surely make you guys sit up and take notice. Just a few!

I got a hunch, for instance, that the one thing Greyfriars has been waiting for all these years is a snappy messenger service. Jevver think of the number of guys at any one moment who are just busting for a messenger to run errands or do some small service for 'em? Jevver think of the number of guys at any one moment who are just crazy to earn themselves a few dimes or jitneys? Nope, you surely have not. But I thought it all out and I guess I'm gonna start a get-together movement of these two parties, with me as the president and big-hearted friend of the whole caboodle. Will it be a wow? I'll say! Shall I rake in the greenbacks? I'll tell a man! Keep your peepers open, buddies, for the F.T.F. Messenger Service, and send in your applications for services or jobs right now!

Another bright notion I had is for a Study Furniture Exchange. Jevver think how useful it would be if you could swap your old junk for almost anything of equal value? Nope, you never did. But you surely will do when the F.T.F. Furniture Swapping Shop gets going, and you'll gladly pay the small commission charged for the benefit and convenience of this snappy new service!

So come back to Greyfriars next term, pals, with glad hearts. Your Uncle Fisher's gonna make life a whole heap brighter than it used to be—and make a whole heap of greenbacks for himself in the bargain! Whoopee! Attaboy!

So-long, pals! FISHER T. FISH.

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"Mersy, kaptin! Don't throw me to the whale, please! Throw in the boys, if you like, but leave me out!"

"Why should I?" rasped the kaptin of the smugglers, with another frightful leer.

"Well, for one thing, kaptin, because I'm such a tuff old joint," wimpered the Head. "These boys are yung and tender; but I should give any whale a severe attack of india-gestion!"

"Haw, haw, haw!" yelled the crew. "Ho, ho, ho! That's the most

commical joak I've heard for a month, or my name's not Kaptin Boolyard!" roared the kaptin. "For saying that, I'll spare you—"

"Oh! Thanks, awfully, kaptin!" "—Till all the rest have gone to their doom!" finished Kaptin Boolyard, with a roar of callous larfter.

"Show a leg, me hearties! Throw in the yung cubs, first!"

"I, I, sir!"

While the Head collapsed on the deck, whimpering and wining with fear, the smugglers seized Jack Jolly and his chums.

As if in antissipation of the meal that was approaching, the grate snout of a whale showed itself out of the water just then. It was a site to make the bravest blanch, but our heroes showed no signs whatever of panick.

"It will be a lark if the whale turns up its nose at us, won't it, you fellows?" remarked Frank Fearless sippantly. "Who knows? Perhaps he'll turn out to be a vegetarian!"

Kaptin Boolyard turned as red as a beetroot at this. To see his prisoners standing there as cool as cucumbers nearly drove him off his onion.

"Overboard with the yung swabs!" he roared. "They'll soon find out what sort of a meal the whale prefers!"

"Half a minnit!"

The smugglers pawed as Mr. Lickham rushed forward. Kaptin Boolyard skowled.

"Well, what?" he barked. "The knots have come untied!" said Mr. Lickham, pointing to the rope which was falling away from the prisoners. "If we don't tie them up again, kaptin, they'll probably swim away to safety before the whale can gobble them up!"

"Sink me! That's true!" rasped Kaptin Boolyard. "Rope 'em up again before you throw 'em in, you careless swabs!"

Mr. Lickham looked gratefully relieved. "Thanks awfully, sir!" he grinned.

The smugglers dropped their yewman burdens on to the deck and started roping them up again.

Now this was exactly what Mr. Lickham wanted. Unnoticed by the others, he had been cutting the prisoners' bonds so as to give the smugglers something to do while he dealt with the kaptin. As soon as they were a'neeling on the deck he picked up a belaying pin and pointed it shorewards as though something had attracted his attention.

"See that light over there, kaptin!" he hist. "We're not spotted, I hoap?"

A spasm of fear crossed the kaptin's face. He looked in the direction indicated. Wallop!

Mr. Lickham's belaying pin hit him on the napper—had! Kaptin Boolyard dropped to the deck without a mormer—knocked out completely!

Luckily, the crew were too bizzy to notiss what had happened. Quick as lightning, Mr. Lickham bent down by Doctor Birchmall, slashed through his bonds, and handed him another belaying pin.

"Give them what for, sir!" he whispered.

The Head nodded viggerously, a new hoap in his eyes now. He rose cautiously to his feet and he and Mr. Lickham crept forward.

Bang! Crash! Clenk! Boom! The two belaying pins lashed out right and left, doing fearful damage among the smugglers! One after another the scoundrells pitched over till the last of them had been put to sleep.

Then, and then only, did the Head and Mr. Lickham lay aside the weapons that had served them so well. "Hooray! Hip-hy-hooray!" they cheered, as they joined hands and performed a triumphal dance over their unconshus viktns.

"Good old Lickham!" chortled Jack Jolly & Co.

Soon the chums of the Fourth were all released. Then the whole party got into the rowing boat and rowed back to the shore, and it was not very long before they wore safely back at Breezyville, enjoying coffy and cakes in the Hotel Posh!

"Well, it certainly was a narrow squeak that time!" remarked the Head, as he took a big bite out of his Swiss roll. "I think we are all to be congratulated on our curridge in the face of danger!"

"Oh, grate pip gasped Jack Jolly & Co.

"Strictly speaking, of course, those scoundrells should all be brought to justiss," went on the Head. "But I realise, Lickham, that to do that would be to embarrass you. And I don't want to see you locked in jail after the way you saved us. Consequently, I think we will let them get away—merely warning the coastguards by tellyfone of the rich harri of contraband that awaits them in that cave!"

Mr. Lickham looked gratefully relieved. "Thanks awfully, sir!" he grinned.



"I must admit that this is more than I really deserve. It was very indiscreet of me to take up smuggling as a holiday sideline. On the other hand, I never really meant any harm. Er—I hoap that this little affair, sir, is not going to make any difference to my position at St. Sam's!"

"Not a bit, my dear fellow!" said the Head cheerfully. "Provided, that

is, that you go straight in the futuro. You promise?"

"I promiss, sir," said Mr. Lickham. And after that he went straight—to the boarding-house where he was staying for the remainder of the holiday!

You gotta hand it to this guy Nugent. On your toes, fellas, for another story next week.

WENT WALKING WITH BLUNDELL

Squiff Says: "Never Again!"

Squiff felt quite bucked when Blundell of the Fifth met him during the vac and condescended to speak to him.

"Feel like a stroll, kid?" Blundell asked. Squiff was only too pleased. "Thanks, Blundell. Matter of fact, I was feeling undecided what to do. This'll settle it."

"Nothing like a stroll now and again," said Blundell, as Squiff fell in beside him. "A quiet stroll across a peaceful stretch of country is soothing to the nerves."

"Quite agree, Blundell!" gasped Squiff. He gasped because he found Blundell's pace a little swifter than he could manage comfortably. Blundell's idea of a stroll was a little odd. It seemed more like a gallop than a stroll to Squiff!

"That's what's wrong with chaps

nowadays," went on Blundell, as he strode along, with Squiff at his side doing his best to keep up with him. "Too much rushing about all over the place. Now, what I always say is, why the hurry?"

"Exactly!" Squiff managed to pant. "It's just a bad habit—nothing more!" said Blundell cheerfully. "They'd be just as happy if they took things quietly and slowly like I do."

Probably Blundell said quite a lot more, but unfortunately we can't tell you what it was. Squiff's breath gave out at this juncture, you see, and he collapsed in a more or less lifeless heap on the grass. Blundell, blissfully unaware of what had happened, sped on at a terrific pace, still talking of the joys of leisurely walking.

Squiff still appreciates the honour Blundell did him in taking him for a stroll. But he has firmly made up his mind not to go next time.

SENSATION AT BOURNEMOUTH! TOP-HATTED

REMOVITE TURNS BEACH-HAWKER

Vernon-Smith and Redwing had a shock on the beach at Bournemouth, when the familiar figure of Stott of the Remove appeared, dressed in his Sunday best suit and a topper—SELLING ICE-CREAMS!

He had a box of ices slung round his neck, and was loudly bawling his wares. He looked extremely embarrassed. A curious crowd of holidaymakers followed him wherever he went.

Smithy and Redwing sat up in their deck-chairs and blinked. Stott saw them and blushed scarlet.

"Ice-cream—vanilla or strawberry! Threepence a tub!" he chanted. "Two vanillas, old bean!" ordered Smithy genially. "And if you don't mind telling us, what's the giddy game?"

"No game at all, old chap," replied Stott, as he opened his box and fished out the goods. "It's deadly serious, as a matter of fact."

Smithy and Redwing took him to a nice, quiet seat on the cliffs. "Now, tell us all about it, old man," urged Redwing soothingly. "If you go on like this, you know, you'll be getting into trouble."

"Very likely I shall," said Stott, with a sigh. "The doctor said I would. He wants me to get into trouble, you see!"

"Eh?" "You see, I'm consulting him at present for nerves—or rather, the mater is, on my behalf," corrected Stott apologetically. "Well, he happens to

be one of these modern psychological johnnies. He says that what I need is to break out—to do something that will single me out from the crowd. He says that's what I need to give me confidence."

"That ice-cream selling stunt was his idea, and there's one more idea of his I have still to carry out. I have to go into the best restaurant in the town and start complaining about the grub till the manager comes up. Then I have to tip a plate of soup over his head!"

Smithy and Redwing followed Stott. The last stage of his "cure," they thought, would probably be interesting. It was. Stott duly kicked up a fuss in the restaurant and duly tipped up a plate of soup over the manager's head. The only drawback was, he did it so well that the manager lost his temper and sent for the police. Stott promptly dived out of the nearest window and ran for his life.

That's all there is to tell you about Stott. The snag we see in his unusual "cure" is that any chap who can do what Stott did has surely quite enough nerve already—without developing any more!



UNCENSORED LETTERS No. 11

NEEDY JUNIOR GAINS AWARD, TAKES INVALID SISTER TO SEA

Dear Bob,—Many thanks for your letter, received by air. It seemed marvellous that it should have come all those thousands of miles in a matter of days!

I can't help envying you your marvellous holiday. But I could hardly have come, even if Mauly had asked me. My sister was taken ill just before the hols., you see, and I shouldn't have felt like going to the other side of the world under the circs. Thank goodness she improved wonderfully after I arrived home and is now almost well again.

Money has been short at home, and I didn't expect that it would run to a seaside holiday this year. But an unexpected stroke of luck came my way. Remember, I went in for a short-story-writing contest in the "Weekly

Sun"? Well, my effort won the first prize of thirty guineas! With this marvellous windfall, I was able to augment the family funds, and we had a really ripping fortnight at Blackpool. And I still have sufficient left to buy some books I've been wanting for a long time, and to put by for the requirements of next term. Better to be born lucky than rich, eh, Bob?

I hope you all have as good a time during the remainder of the vac. as you were having when you wrote your letter. Am looking forward keenly to seeing you all again. You'll have plenty of tales to tell in the autumn evenings, this year!

Kindest regards to Mauly and all the lads!

Your old friend, MARK.